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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended to help create and sustain good relations between purchasers and suppliers of foods and related products. It is designed to guide anyone involved in the purchasing function: purchasing officers and managers in medium and large establishments, food and beverage managers, catering managers, chefs, caterers, restaurateurs, hoteliers, and proprietors. The first two chapters set out the principles of effective purchasing. Chapter 1 offers practical advice on meeting customer needs. Chapter 2 focuses on meeting business needs. Chapters 3-14 address the following aspects of the purchasing function: the process; controlling purchases; controlling stock; deciding quality; deciding quantity; stating needs; identifying and selecting suppliers; getting the best from the supplier; negotiating; contracts; hygiene, safety, and the law; and effective purchasing. Chapters 15-30 offer specific recommendations for purchase of the following items: meat; poultry, game, and offal (liver, kidneys, heart, etc.); fish; fruit; vegetables; dairy produce and eggs; bakery goods; dry goods; seasonings; oils and fats; canned goods; chilled and frozen foods; alcoholic beverages; nonalcoholic beverages; paper goods; and cleaning materials. An index is provided. (YLB)

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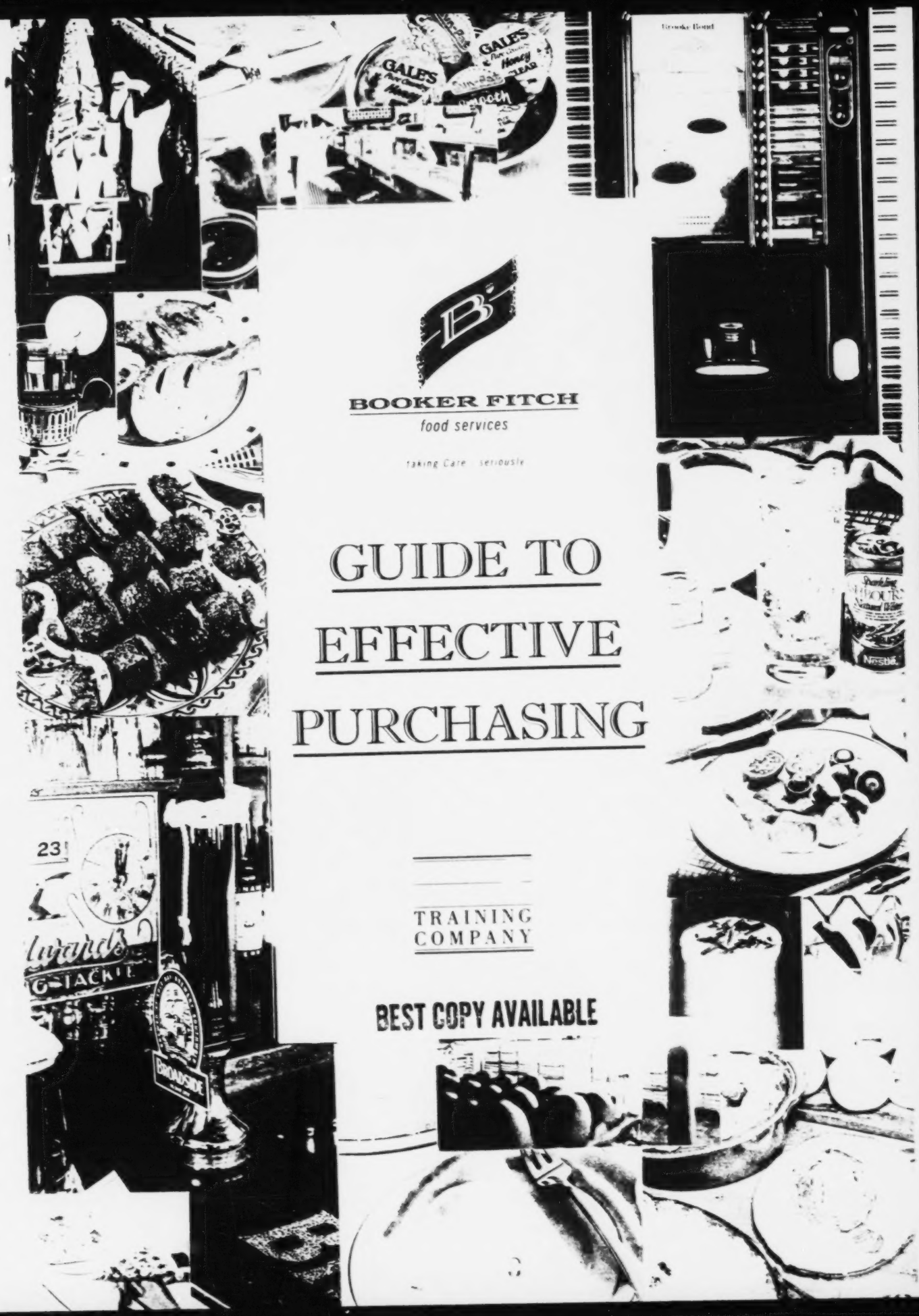

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food services

taking Care seriously

GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE PURCHASING

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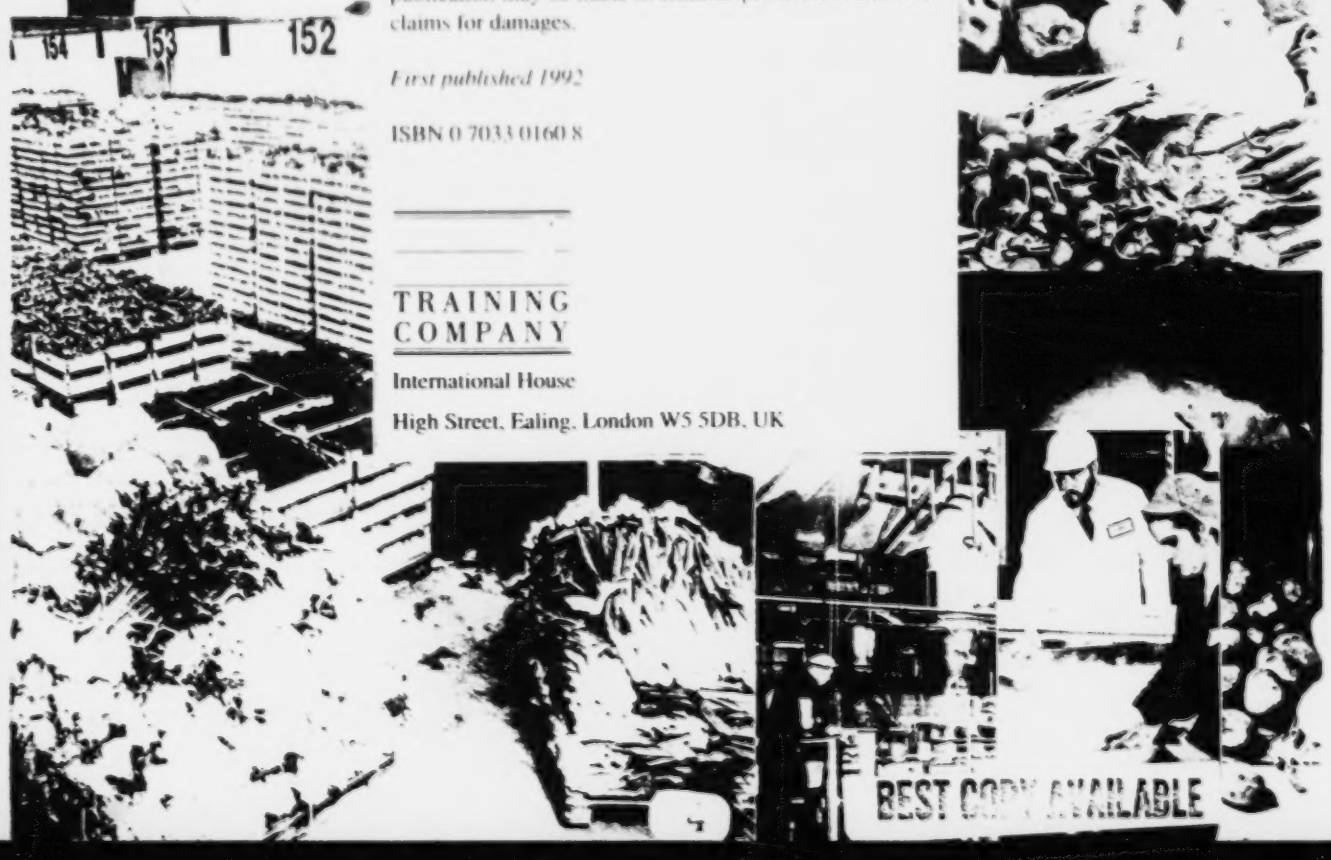

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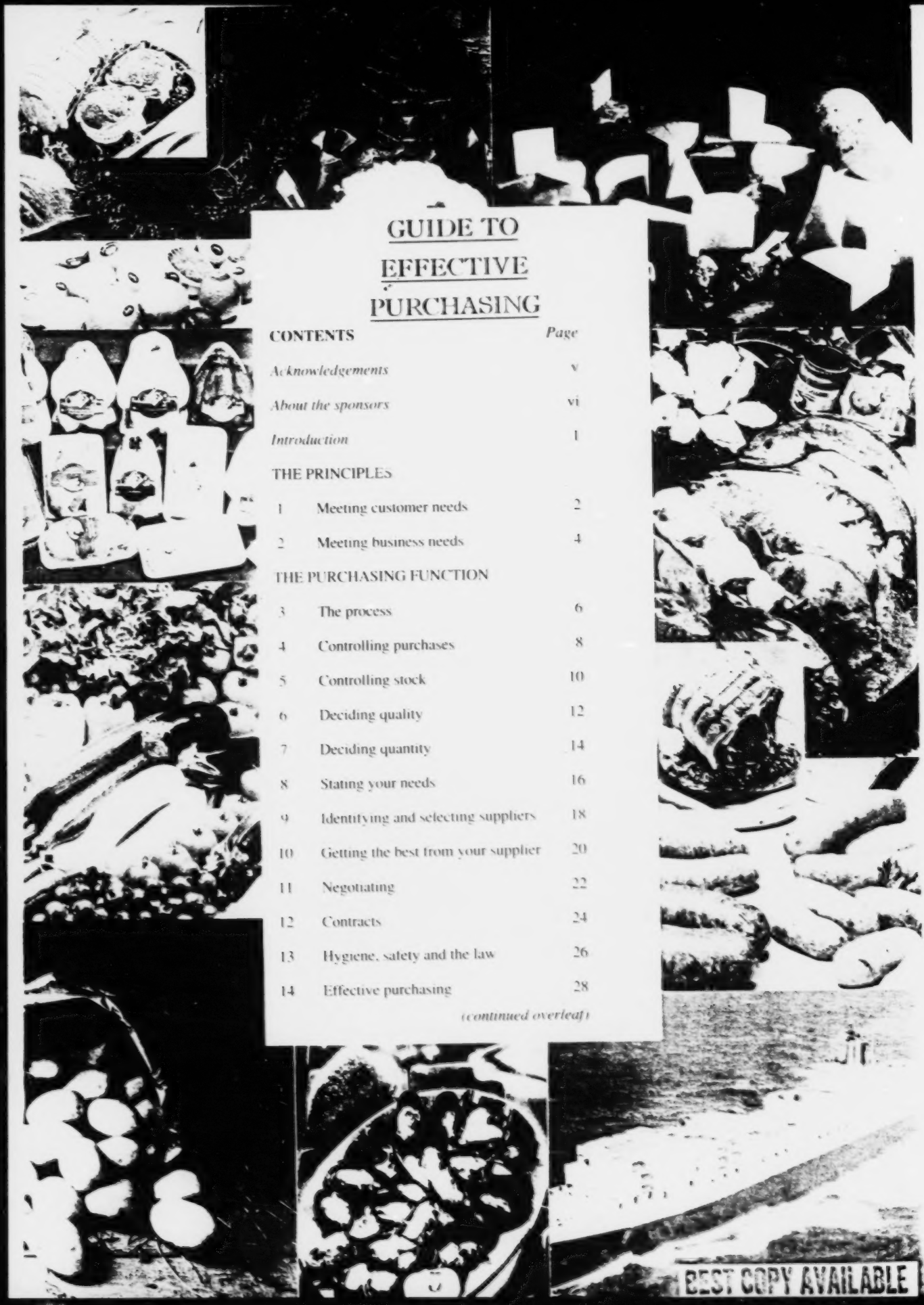

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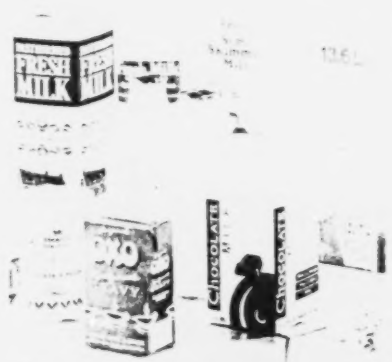

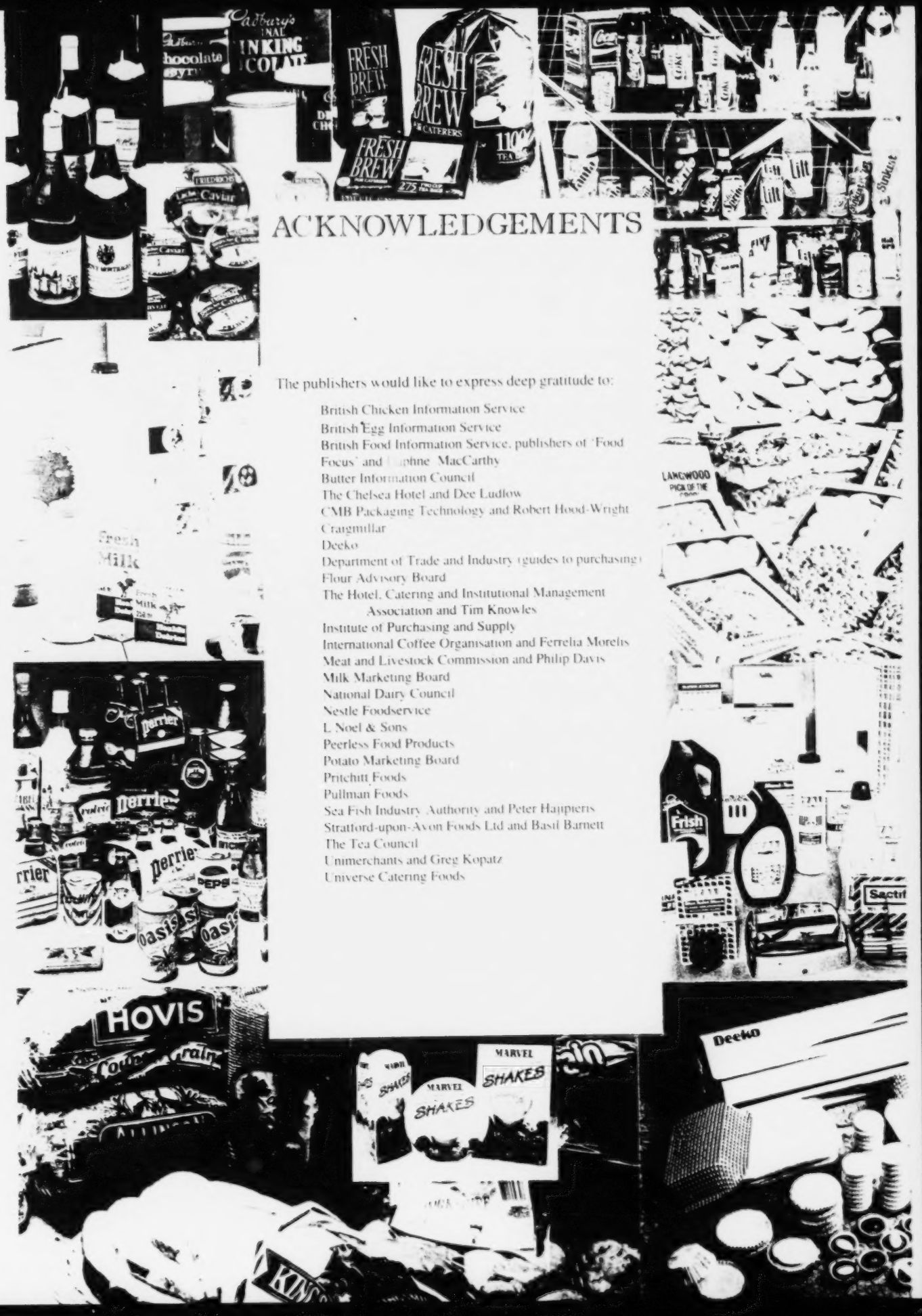

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ABOUT THE SPONSORS

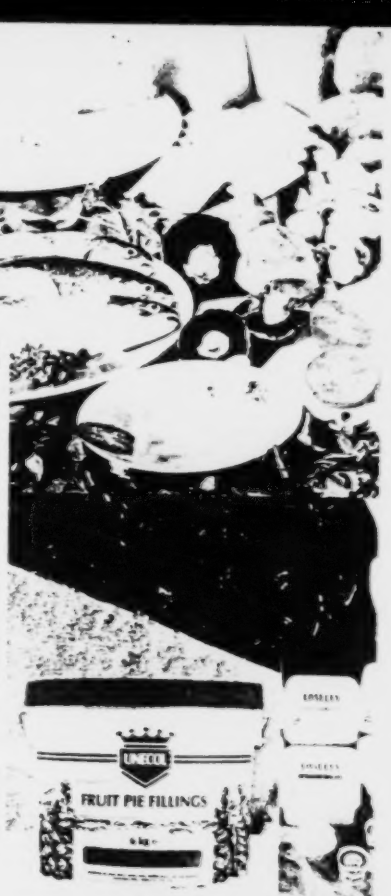
From Booker Fitch Food Services Ltd over 55,000 caterers get what they want, when they want it, and in perfect condition. The company's proud tradition of service to the hotel and catering industry dates back to 1784.

Booker Fitch is the industry's leading supplier, with its own tailor-made catering brands — Unecol and Coronet — plus the best from other famous brand names. These include ambient, chilled, frozen and fresh foods, as well as wine and catering disposables, cleaning, janitorial and hygiene products.

A range of products to suit the varying requirements of caterers. Products from all over the world that have been carefully researched and selected to meet the needs of the industry's customers. Products that offer large and small caterers alike, true value-for-money. Products that never compromise on quality.

In recent years Booker Fitch has invested millions of pounds in improving quality assurance and customer service standards. Storage and delivery equipment are state-of-the-art. Chilled, frozen and ambient products come in the same multi-temperature delivery vehicle. The national network of depots and delivery fleets, linked by sophisticated technology, ensures that every Booker Fitch customer deals with local staff, who agree a timetable to suit the customer's needs, and then stick to it.

Booker Fitch Food Services Ltd is resolved to provide the finest support any caterer or hotelier could ask for. *Booker Fitch Food Services taking Care — seriously.*



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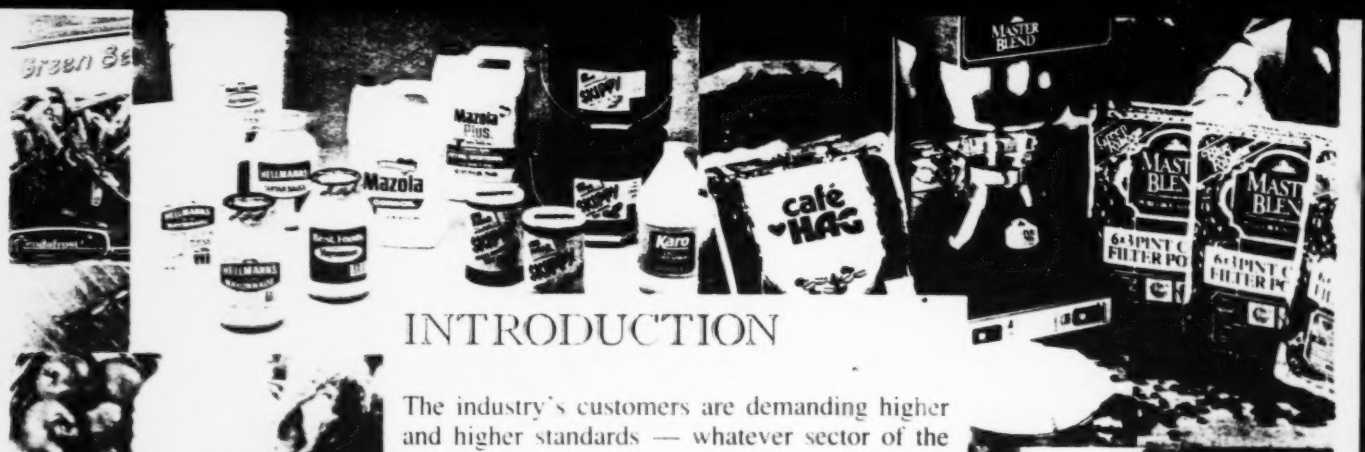

INTRODUCTION

The industry's customers are demanding higher and higher standards — whatever sector of the market they form, whatever their level of spending power. Against this background caterers and hoteliers are experiencing unprecedented pressure on operating and profit margins, and increasing competition from both within and outside the industry.

Purchasing is a vital key to quality and high standards in the industry — and effective purchasing skills are an important part in the armoury of the industry's managers and aspiring managers.

This book is intended to help create and sustain good relations between purchasers and suppliers. It will guide anyone who gets involved in the purchasing function: purchasing officers and managers in medium and large establishments, food and beverage managers, catering managers, chefs, caterers, publicans, restaurateurs, hoteliers, and proprietors. Students and management trainees will find the breadth and scope of the book's content valuable support in working towards National Vocational Qualifications and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Catering and Hospitality Management at levels 3 and 4.

The principles and practices of effective purchasing are set out clearly, with the division of the material into double page spreads making it easy to access the information at any point. There are numerous examples of produce and goods which are available, and practical, down to earth advice from five experienced caterers who represent the industry's enormous range of establishments.

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1 THE PRINCIPLES

meeting customer needs

Gaining the confidence and goodwill of your customers begins with understanding why they need your product or services. Most people must spend time away from home through necessity or choice. Effective purchasing will allow you to offer these people value for money and reliable service, building your reputation so that you can capture their trade.

Gaining the confidence and goodwill of your customers begins with understanding why they need your product or services.

WHO IS YOUR CUSTOMER?

Your customers spend time away from home in some of these circumstances:

- Travelling by car causes both the driver and passengers to become bored and tired, which they can relieve by stopping for good food, drink and service.

- Business people who spend time, possibly alone, between appointments appreciate good food and a comfortable, attractive room for an overnight stay. A delicious meal in a pleasant restaurant can clinch a business deal.

- Conferences and exhibitions require a working lunch, buffet or restaurant meal to relieve the time spent concentrating on speakers at a conference, or comparing business products on display at exhibitions.

- People at leisure visiting relatives or friends, or touring places of interest may make a random selection of a restaurant for entertaining their friends, or of a hotel for their own accommodation. But they still expect hotels and restaurants to suit their locations. For example, a restaurant or hotel in Windsor may reflect a royal influence in style and standards. People taking part in sport or leisure activities need refreshment. And spectators can be as hungry and thirsty as the players.

- Taking a course of study requires intensive concentration, so students and trainees welcome their meal breaks as this gives them time to relax. Students tend to be critical about catering facilities.

- An anniversary, promotion or exam success requires a special celebration to commemorate the occasion. Some of the guests for these or other events, such as a birthday, a wedding, a funeral or a speech day, may need to stay overnight, so the hotelier or restaurateur needs to consider the strong emotional feelings that may be generated by the occasion, and fine tune the service accordingly.

- Visiting a hospital patient or a prisoner is in itself traumatic, so good food and beverages can give comfort. Likewise, people in convalescence need food, drink and services as good as that at home, if not better, as part of the healing process. Good meals affect the [illegible]ale and stability of a well-run prison. People who are homeless, infirm or n[illegible] ill need good food and services to feel that someone cares about them.

- People on military duty take part in concentrated periods of physical work — sometimes under difficult conditions. They need good, sustaining food and services.

WHAT ARE YOU OFFERING?

Deciding on and offering the products and services to meet your customers' needs can be innovative to your purchasing.

■ Menu variety needs the co-operation of your supplier so that you can offer a range of dishes suitable for special occasions, such as weddings, engagements, anniversaries, birthdays, Easter, Christmas or sporting events.

Try out unusual ingredients, such as exotic seafood, regional specialities and international flavours.

New cooking and presentation techniques broaden your customers' experience of different foods.

Offer a range of wines which includes the new and exciting, such as an Australian Chardonnay or a Chilean Cabernet as well as the traditional ones. The sparkling alcohol-free range will add interest to your wine list.

Menu variety needs the co-operation of your supplier.

■ Your general price range could include special ideas to boost sales and let your suppliers demonstrate their versatility. People eat fewer meals in restaurants, and take fewer long weekends in hotels these days. To draw back the trade, your purchasing must show careful regard to the area and to your potential customers to have impact.

Burger King owes its success in the UK to its awareness of the need for reasonably priced, reliable fast food and its efficient purchasing strategies.

Offer a gourmet weekend at your hotel, to include the added delight of a wine-tasting morning. The winners of a wine selection competition could be given a special bottle for their dinner table. Hold the event on a Saturday night to avoid drink and drive problems. Your wine supplier will assist.

Offer a meal free for one child under 14 from a children's menu if the family is served before 7.30 p.m. and two adults are having meals.

■ Special events and extra provisions and services can attract trade. Your suppliers will support ideas which require additional purchases and publicity material. These purchases can be made by pubs, staff restaurants for functions, or any restaurant. For example:

A Hallowe'en Night dinner will need fancy dress and decorations as well as a pumpkin for the witch. Themed events make good business sense.

Christmas festivities offer the hotel and restaurant endless possibilities for innovative decorations. Suppliers are prepared for this and can provide special catalogues well in advance.

Birthday and anniversary cards can be displayed for sale to visitors. A card placed on the guest of honour's table with the best wishes and compliments of the manager, hotel group or owner is a goodwill — and good business — gesture.

2 THE PRINCIPLES

meeting business needs

All successful businesses must have financial stability, which is your responsibility to establish and maintain by careful planning. Purchasing plays a primary role in planning. It is not simply a matter of ordering needed products. In the hotel and catering industry, purchasing involves continually assessing needs for maximum value for both the operation and its customers.

Your aims are to:

- provide food and services within a given budget
- enhance the reputation of your company to increase its share of the market
- target markets to develop future business
- satisfy shareholders by producing good dividends
- provide a living for you and your family.

Your products and services will sell if you know your customers' needs for your chosen section of the market.

To achieve these objectives you need to define three areas.

1. Will your products and services sell, and at what price?

They will sell if you know your customers' needs for your chosen section of the market, and you maintain those needs when your reputation is established.

Prices have to be within the range your customers can afford. For instance, Pizza Hut aims at the family market.

2. What will the products cost?

Cost in terms of value for money must be established and regularly reviewed in the light of changes in customer expectations. Careful negotiations before deciding on your supplier will help you achieve the cost control targets you have set for your business. Establish a reputation with your suppliers for regular bargaining over costs of their products. Expect only the best value for the best price!

memo

Select suppliers who give value for money at the right time.

Advise your suppliers of the standards you expect from them.

Develop an ordering system for obtaining the correct quality and quantity of products from your suppliers.

Plan an effective checking system when goods are received from your suppliers. Design a reliable storage-control system for your products, which maintains safety and standards. Use a system to issue stores.

Make sure your staff are able to use the products to give you maximum financial returns.

3. How will your product and services be used?

Purchasing the correct quality and quantity of a product, at the right time, at the best price is only the beginning.

A menu item which is a good seller will be spoilt if the preparation or cooking is not kept up to standard. A succulent dish will not earn its cash value if it is poorly presented or served. The customers will see this as a reflection of the standards throughout your operation.

Your premises will deteriorate if the linen, rooms or service areas are cleaned with inappropriate materials. If customers notice low standards of hygiene, the media can quickly spread the word.

Purchasing quality goods becomes pointless if the items are not stored correctly. This applies to any product. For instance, badly stored packets of paper serviettes can result in wastage. The contents will become creased, which spoils the appearance of your restaurant tables. Vegetables stored at the wrong temperature, in strong light, squashed on a shelf, will be unacceptable for use.

Wastage and therefore costs increase when staff are not trained adequately in how to handle the products. Staff do their job better when shown how to handle the various products and materials. Do not rely on them using common sense to produce the standards you have set.

Over-ordering of stock may increase wastage. It will also tie up your organisation's money in goods, which cannot be quickly turned into cash. Do not over-order just to make sure you avoid running out.

Robert Ryan is executive chef at the Café Café Bar Brasserie at Harrow-on-the-Hill. This is a new concept venue, in a trendy area, near Harrow School. Business is fast with 80 covers in 1½ hours.

The aim, as described by general manager Julian Meredith, is to provide quality food in a relaxed atmosphere. Theatre evenings are a special feature, with a classical menu to accompany the play.

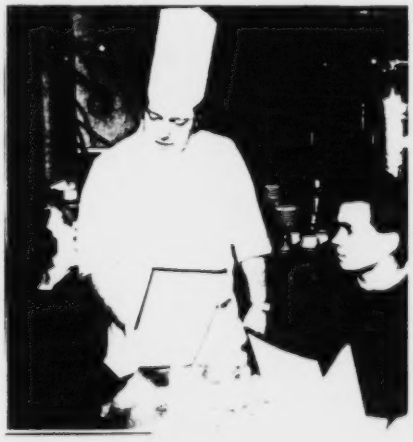
Purchasing is a vital part of the business. If you overspend and do not put purchases to good use, you are throwing money away.

advice

from Robert Ryan, Cafe Cafe

When selecting your suppliers you must make sure that they can:

- supply a consistently good quality. Cafe Cafe prides itself on the menu selection, and high standards of dishes and presentation achieved. This can only be maintained with good products, carefully handled in preparation and cooking.
- deliver at the frequency you require, at the right time and place. You are paying suppliers to provide a service, therefore they should meet your needs. Chef Ryan works on a daily delivery basis for perishables and a twice-weekly delivery for provisions, one at the beginning of the week and one at the end, ready for the weekend trade.
- supply at a price which is competitive, and cost effective for a small business. The cost must be the best for the required quality — not necessarily the cheapest.
- Don't overstock, keep certain items ready for emergencies. Money on your shelves isn't earning any interest. For small businesses, which haven't the space for large amounts of stores, cash and carry outlets, supermarkets, and local shopkeepers can be the most appropriate suppliers of extras.



3 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

the process

1. Planning

Establish what is required from menu plans, beverage and wine lists, cleaning schedules, checklists and so forth. Check these reflect the needs identified for your customers and your business, and as part of the analysis, decide on the quality required.

Determine the quantity required. This will involve decisions on stock levels, frequency and timing of deliveries, meeting forecasts of business and usage levels, and putting to good use your and other people's knowledge and past experience.

How much you order, and what quality you order, have a direct bearing on financial targets and cash flow. Quite often the price you pay will reflect how much you are purchasing, with discounts for quantity. Minor adjustments to the quality acceptable may achieve disproportionate savings, allowing you to take advantage of favourable market conditions.

Purchasing is the link between satisfied customers for your products or services and achieving your financial targets.

2. Selecting a supplier

For each of the various commodities required, obtain information from alternative suppliers. Many suppliers offer a wide range of commodities, so for these the choice will be based on an overall assessment rather than a detailed analysis of hundreds of different commodities. As protection against the non-availability of certain key commodities, you might select two or three suppliers. However, dealing with too many suppliers increases the administration work and makes it difficult to build up good relations.

Formal tenders state in detail the specifications required for each commodity and are sent to prospective suppliers. The supplier who is awarded the contract should guarantee consistent standards and agree prices. Penalty clauses may be used in the contract to protect both parties.

3. Ordering

State which products you require through formal or informal communication with your suppliers to ensure that they meet your needs.

In all cases, written details provide a means of checking that the delivery agrees with the original order. They also provide a readily accessible record for colleagues of what is on order.

4. Delivery, storage and use

If anything does not correspond with what you ordered, this is the time to establish the discrepancies with the supplier. If anything is sub-standard, this is the point when you return the rejects.

Store acceptable products. Issue products for use. Control storage and issue to prevent loss and wastage.

Check invoices with delivery records to confirm that you are being charged for what was delivered, and that credits have been given for returns and shortages.

5. Evaluation

Monitor the performance of your suppliers. Keep a check on prices. Keep up-to-date with product developments. Regularly review how effectively you are meeting customer needs and business objectives.

Douglas Oram is group purchasing manager for Metropole Hotels, one of the UK's largest conference facility specialists.

advice

from Douglas Oram, Metropolitan Hotels

When selecting your supplier:

- agree any terms and conditions for delivery times and places, for instance that the cost of delivery to your premises is included in the quote
- ensure that payment arrangements are clearly established. There should be no hidden extras, such as being charged interest on late payments, without your agreement
- let the supplier make an offer. Consider the bottom line figure, £1.50 net is better than £2 less 2 per cent discount
- agree on split case rates. A small business would only require low stocks of spirits, one bottle of Apricot brandy from a case of 12 might have a large premium charge added
- if you are a small business, consider a 'just in time' or JIT policy. The advantage is that capital is not tied up in unnecessary stock. However if local supplies of certain goods are ever short, you would have to look further afield to meet your needs, and in some instances you may not be successful in time.

When ordering goods:

- state the intended use for the product. This will guide your supplier when selecting the items
- make sure you describe the product accurately. Only state caviar if you can charge your customers accordingly, otherwise ask for lumpfish roe. Don't ask for brandy if you want cognac
- quality is important, but do not overspecify — you are paying for what you state. To be cost effective, match quality with what is right for your trade. Food purchases need to be fresh, but size and shape might vary according to your customer expectations. Non-food items should also reflect the image of your business. For example if you are choosing toilet paper for a hotel, compare samples from several suppliers. Thickness may be less important than sheet yield.

A good purchaser should:

- be an addictive gatherer of information. What may seem useless today, could be valuable tomorrow. Read all your trade journals
- establish good relations with your supplier. Mutual confidence saves problems arising in the long term.

The end objectives are:

- the right product is selected
- the goods are delivered at the right time
- the delivery is at the right place
- the goods are at the right price, for the quality and quantity ordered.

7

4 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

controlling purchases

1. Planning the order

However small your business, control starts with a planned order system.

An order can be placed by phone, in person to the sales rep or supplier, by post or fax. A record should be kept, preferably in an order book with two copies.

- The original can be sent to suppliers as written confirmation, or taken with you, when buying direct from a market or cash and carry, for example.
- A copy can be sent to your accounts department for checking against the supplier's invoice before payment is made.
- A copy can be retained by the person placing the order, as a record of what has been ordered. This will prevent anyone else placing a duplicate order.

Some suppliers, particularly for a large order, will send an advice note in advance of the order. This acknowledges the order, and often indicates when and how the order will be delivered. It will also show if any items are unavailable.

2. Checking the delivery

- Check goods against your record of the order and against the supplier's delivery note. Have you received the items you ordered? Is the quantity and quality that which you specified?

Some purchase order forms have a column for recording the actual quantity received. This shows immediately any discrepancies and helps monitor suppliers' performance. For instance, constant over- or under-deliveries of fresh produce will significantly increase your costs over a period of time.

- Return any damaged goods or wrong items or inferior brands, using a returns form which you may give to the carrier or send to the supplier. If the goods have been delivered by the supplier's own driver, you may be given a credit note immediately; otherwise one will be sent. Alternatively, the invoice will reflect the correct details.

advice

from Brian Watts, BE Services

- keep the purchasing system simple but effective
- limit the number of suppliers, too many can increase costs
- keep stocks low, unused stock on your shelves could be earning interest in your bank
- bulk buying is not always economical
- some discounts are not advantageous — compare prices from other companies, when selecting your supplier
- establish loyalty from and with your suppliers, but occasionally tender for certain goods to get the 'feel of the market'

Brian Watts is managing director of BE Services Ltd., which provides the catering services at the Bank of England in Threadneedle Street in the City of London

Good purchasing begins with establishing quality standards throughout the catering operation. Every department within BE Services is involved with quality control. For example a report of 'high plate waste' from the wash-up supervisor would lead to a full investigation of standards in food preparation, cooking, receiving and ordering goods from suppliers, to ensure that quality is re-established and maintained

Efficient stock control is important. BE Services uses a comprehensive computerised accounts system, which covers:

- *receipt of goods. After delivery details are entered, the new stock levels are calculated and an adjusted 'average' price worked out (this is more satisfactory than 'valuing' all stock at the latest price)*
- *requisitioning of stores, stock adjustments*
- *issue of payment advice*
- *weekly stock figures reconciled with a physical stock check*
- *comparisons of actuals with budget forecast*

Generally, suppliers will not accept a claim for short delivery or damaged or faulty goods, unless it is made at the time of delivery, or when delivery is made by a third party, within a certain period, for example 24 hours of receipt. The signature of the person who received the goods and passed them as satisfactory can appear on the delivery note.

3. Payment for the goods

Check that the supplier's invoice agrees with the record of what was ordered and what was delivered. Returns should be taken into account on the invoice or be covered by a credit note.

If the purchase order has an additional column for costing the items, then the details should also be checked against the invoice, after taking into account any discount and VAT.

Purchase order book requirements

- Name and full address of supplier. This address would probably be that of the depot from which you are receiving the goods, but in some instances a large supplier requires orders to be sent direct to its head office.
- Your company's name, full address and telephone number, and delivery details if different.
- Purchase order number (this may be a serial number in the order book) and contract number where this applies. These mean you and your supplier can easily refer to a particular order. When the order numbers are quoted on delivery notes and invoices, they help the checking process.
- Date when delivery is required. You must order economically, but still ensuring you have what you need when you need it. It may be necessary to allow for delays in the delivery.
- Description of the goods required. If you require first-quality branded goods, state this; otherwise the supplier could assume that you would accept standard quality, or the cheapest. If, for example, you are ordering canned apricots, indicate whether you want them whole, halved or sliced. For stationery, you might order 1 ream of s/o 45 gsm² A4 white bank.
- The unit depends on how the goods are packed.
- Quantity required. The quantity you require of the unit will be easier to state once you have identified the 'unit' in which the goods are delivered.

  Your supplier will have described these 'units' in the advice note or price list. Take note and follow them, to avoid confusion in the supplier's order department, or being embarrassed when you get a delivery of 20 cases of 10 x 1 kg packets of petits pois when you actually wanted 20 x 1 kg.
- Order of details. For each item, your order must state: quantity, unit and description or name. The order in which these details are written varies according to company practice and/or the computer program in use.
- The price per unit, quoted by the supplier. Some companies do not price order forms except perhaps at a later stage for control purposes.

A unit can be:

- a 'case' of 6 x A10 canned items
- a 'case' of 6 x 2 kg Millac milk
- a 'case' of 6 x 1 litre bottles whisky
- a 'bottle' of a liqueur
- '2 x 1/2 gallon' jars mint sauce
- a 'packet' of 100 3-ply serviettes
- '2 kg' of granulated sugar
- 'pkts' of matches
- 'box' of 10 14" x 14" dusters

5 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

controlling stock

If your stores are organised with items grouped according to use, it will:

- make identification of goods easier for everyone who has access to the stores
- prevent certain goods from contaminating other goods
- ensure that stock is used in correct rotation: first in, first out
- make it easier to see at a glance what items are running low, and to spot other problems, such as damaged goods being kept on the shelves. Efficient visual control can be a valuable back-up to paper or computer-based control systems
- make stock counting quicker and more straightforward, for instance by ensuring that there are no part-filled boxes, no hidden items.

Stock control systems

Stock control systems vary considerably in their complexity and in the amount of information they produce. The general aims include:

- providing an at-a-glance record of what is in stock. This may be a card attached to the shelf or bin where the item is stored, or a stock record book kept in a central place, or a computer which can be accessed from several terminals
- summarising the relevant details of the product concerned. Typically its name, the unit or size in which it is purchased, for instance A2 for cans. Some establishments also keep records of the supplier(s) of each product and the unit cost — this helps when ordering (who to order from and the likely price) and when stocktaking (easier to establish the value of the stocks)
- recording receipts and issues. In addition to the date and the quantity received or issued, details may also be kept of the delivery or invoice number for incoming goods and the requisition number for outgoing goods (so the transaction can be checked if necessary)
- giving information which will help the purchasing function. When minimum and maximum stock levels are established, the person responsible for ordering knows when to order (when, or just before the minimum quantity is reached) and how much to order (to take the stock up to the maximum level). In addition, a re-order quantity is sometimes given and this will take account of the supplier's standard order quantities as well as the stock usage between the time of placing the order and receipt of the new stock
- offering security. At any time management can check that the balance on the stock record agrees with an actual count of what is on the shelves. This discourages theft (reducing costs) and encourages staff to maintain the systems properly (so records of stock usage are reliable and if, for example, a discrepancy arises between items sold and items consumed, the field of investigation can be narrowed to the preparation and service stages). In an organisation where several people deal with stock records, an added precaution is for everyone to initial or identify by a personal code the transactions that have concerned them.

Goods in store represent an important investment to a business, large or small. The storeroom is like a bank vault and the goods are assets to be protected

Issuing of stores

A store requisition is essentially a list of what items are required, the number, unit and name or description. It will give the name of the person or department requiring the items and the date, and usually has to be signed by an authorised person. When the items are issued they will be checked off against the requisition and note made of any adjustments and the date. The person receiving the goods is normally asked to sign for the delivery. Orders are usuali completed in duplicate, one copy kept in the stores, one by the person placing the order.

Name of the establishment:

Department/person ordering:

Date No:

Number	Unit	Description
2	A2 tin	select peaches
3	4 oz pkt	Lyons ground coffee
1	1 kg box	cheese biscuits

Authorised signature:

Goods received by:

Date:

Example of a store requisition

RECIPE SELECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND STANDARDISATION

No matter what the size of the business, a consistent product depends on the use of certain ingredients, in specific quantities, prepared in a particular way.

This is why most caterers stick to the good recipes they have developed. It makes it much easier to order the correct ingredients, in sufficient quantity, without being wasteful. The cost of the dish will be broadly similar each time it is prepared, and so selling prices will give a consistent margin.

The selling price itself can be more accurately worked out for such 'standard recipes'. It means costing each ingredient used to make a particular quantity of the dish. If the prices of some ingredients change, the effect on the overall cost can be quickly worked out, and if necessary, the selling price of the dish adjusted. If the standard recipe also includes the method of preparation and presentation, then every member of staff has clear guidelines on the standards required. This ensures a consistently good product for the customers, and, providing the standard recipe has been carefully developed, does not hinder creativity.

Calculating selling price from cost price

If the policy is to apply a standard gross profit margin to a particular dish, its selling price can be calculated by using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Food cost}}{100 - \text{gross profit \%}} \times 100 = \text{selling price}$$

For example if the food cost of a dish is £2.00 and a 60% gross profit margin is required:

$$\frac{2.00}{100 - 60} \times 100 = £5.00$$

Most customers do not like surprises when their meal is served. They have chosen the establishment because they have a good idea (and advertising may influence this) of what they can expect. Standard recipes can help to meet these expectations. And carefully chosen suppliers working to a sufficiently detailed order should also ensure that the basic products achieve this aim.

memo

- Use whatever recipe you have developed, whether from a magazine, book or from the imagination and experience of you or your staff.
- Write down the name of the dish. (Remember that menu descriptions should not mislead, so if you are preparing a classical dish, for example Chicken Kiev, use the classical ingredients.)
- Indicate the number of portions the recipe will make. This may be 50 if you are cooking for large numbers, one or two for a la carte dishes.
- Itemise for each recipe ingredient its name, the quantity/weight/volume used and the cost per unit (this will relate to the purchasing records, so for a liquid it may be per litre).
- Calculate the total cost for the portions prepared and the cost per portion.
- Describe in sufficient detail the method for preparing the dish, including cooking times and temperatures where appropriate.
- Describe the method of presentation including garnishes which can or must be used and any accompaniments.

6 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

deciding quality

The quality you purchase should reflect the overall standard for your operation.

The decor in your dining room, bedroom, and service areas creates a certain ambience and style, appropriate for the particular section of the public you have chosen to serve. Customers see and recognise this, and expect this standard to be reflected in the style of menu and service you offer, in other words in your product. Like you, your customer is looking for value for money.

Before customers enter your premises for the first time, many will have seen an advertisement in a local or national newspaper, or a pamphlet. Your style of advertising must be linked firmly to the standard you are offering. Your business stationery should also reflect this. If you use a logo and/or certain name style, and particular colours, these should appear consistently in advertisements, on stationery, promotional material and other printed items. Customers use their sense of sight, smell, taste and feel to judge quality.

People respond to what they see, if it satisfies their needs. When each element complements the other, you create harmony.

You must identify the quality required to satisfy your customers' needs. Quality is not necessarily measured by cost. Certain products do not need to be the most expensive.

- If you decide on coloured cotton tablecloths with white linen overcloths, it might be acceptable to use a plasticised paper overcloth. A well-folded paper serviette, white or attractively-coloured, is acceptable in many restaurants and function rooms. On the other hand, reducing your linen quality might have the effect that customers' expectations are no longer met by the menu choice, the range of wines on your wine list, and the standard of your bedrooms.

- Customers would not expect their nostrils to be assaulted by an overpowering smell of curry and garlic, on entering a carvery-style restaurant! They might if the restaurant was a speciality curry house.

- Cheaper commodities are acceptable if used in certain menu items. You wouldn't buy top rump for a beef stew. It may not be necessary to purchase lamb's kidneys for a steak and kidney pie. A misshapen passion fruit will be acceptable in fruit salad.

- Chemicals require careful selection to keep a good standard of cleanliness throughout. A sudden deterioration in hygiene standards would be noticed and would reflect on the whole of your operation.

- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages should reflect constant quality in the selection and brands available.

Quality can be recognised by a brand name whose reputation depends on reliability.

Remember that your customers can vote with their feet. When they decide that your standards do not live up to their expectations, they will not buy your product or service again.

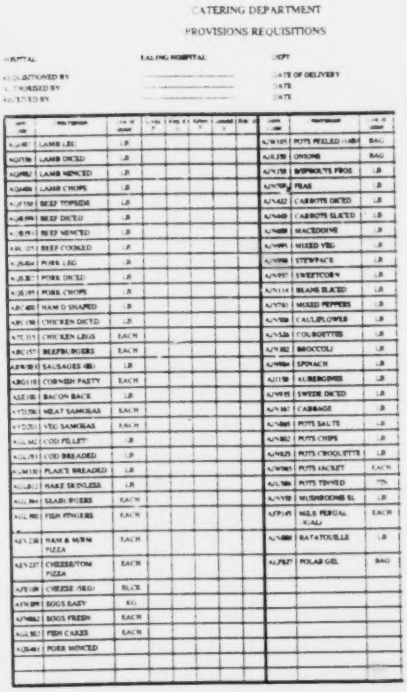
Food quality marks

The British Food Quality Mark is awarded by Food from Britain under its quality certification scheme. The Foodmark, which takes the form of a red, white and blue triangle, can be used

- on its own as it is on onions, tomatoes, pre-packed celery and some canned fruit and vegetables
- or in conjunction with a symbol or logo specific to that particular product's certification scheme. For example with the Minimum Standard Scheme of the Potato Marketing Board; the Quality Assurance Scheme of the Scottish Salmon Growers Association; Kingdom Marketing Scheme (apple growers); Charter Quality Mark (bacon); the Cheese Mark; Quality British Chicken; Scotch Quality beef and Welsh Premium lamb.

Phillip Ruddock is responsible for the catering and other site services at Ealing Hospital, Uxbridge Road, Southall.

Catering purchasing responsibilities vary for managers in the hospital service. Some regions operate a central buying system, with managers submitting their orders to the divisional office. Others allow managers to order directly from suppliers.



CATERING DEPARTMENT

PROVISIONS REQUISITIONS

HOSPITAL: EALING HOSPITAL DEPT

REQUISITIONED BY: DATE OF DELIVERY

AUTHORISED BY: DATE

RECEIVED BY: DATE

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT OF ORDER	ORDER	ISSUE	CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT OF ORDER
A/M105	LAMB LEG	LB			A/W105	POTS PEELED (40)	BAG
A/M150	LAMB DICED	LB			A/L150	ONIONS	BAG
A/M062	LAMB MINCED	LB			A/V150	BRSPROUTS FROZ	LB
A/M089	LAMB CHOPS	LB			A/V709	PEAS	LB
A/M150	BEEF TOPSIDE	LB			A/V402	CARROTS DICED	LB
A/M099	BEEF DICED	LB			A/V403	CARROTS SLICED	LB
A/M151	BEEF MINCED	LB			A/V088	MACEDOINE	LB
A/M151	BEEF COOKED	LB			A/V095	MIXED VEG	LB
A/M064	PORK LEG	LB			A/V098	STEWPACK	LB
A/M150	PORK DICED	LB			A/V097	SWEETCORN	LB
A/M195	PORK CHOPS	LB			A/V114	BEANS SLICED	LB
A/C400	HAM D SHAPED	LB			A/V701	MIXED PEPPERS	LB
A/C150	CHICKEN DICED	LB			A/V500	CAULIFLOWER	LB
A/C151	CHICKEN LEGS	EACH			A/V526	COLDBUTTIES	LB
A/C157	BEEFBURGERS	EACH			A/V102	BROCCOLI	LB
A/F9301	SAUSAGES (8)	LB			A/V004	SPINACH	LB
A/G110	CORNISH PASTY	EACH			A/J150	AUBERGINES	LB
A/S150	BACON BACK	LB			A/V915	SWEDE DICED	LB
A/V2501	MEAT SAMOSAS	EACH			A/V107	CABBAGE	LB
A/V2501	VEG SAMOSAS	EACH			A/V001	POTS SAUTE	LB
A/L162	COD FILLET	LB			A/V002	POTS CHIPS	LB
A/L151	COD BREADED	LB			A/V025	POTS CROQUETTE	LB
A/M181	PLAICE BREADED	LB			A/V901	POTS JACKET	EACH
A/L	HAKE SKINLESS	LB			A/L500	POTS TINNED	TIN
A/L	SLABS FISHES	EACH			A/V150	MUSHROOMS SL	LB
A/L	FISH FINGERS	EACH			A/P145	MILK PERSIAL 1/4ALL	EACH
A/V230	HAM & MSHM PIZZA	EACH			A/V880	RATATOUILLE	LB
A/V237	CHEESE/TOM PIZZA	EACH			A/P827	POLAR GEL	BAG
A/F109	CHEESE (SEG)	BLCK					
A/F009	EGGS BABY	KG					
A/M062	EGGS FRESH	EACH					
A/L502	FISH CAKES	EACH					
A/M401	PORK MINCED						

advice

from Phillip Ruddock, Ealing Health Authority

Selecting your supplier:

- test the products of different companies to find out the yield, flavour and standard of each product, and to compare prices
- examine the hygiene standards of the supplier generally and in particular the preparation, storage and transporting of perishable food which must be temperature controlled
- question your suppliers' awareness of the food regulations
- if using a local supplier, compare the 'front of shop' facilities and standards of staff, with the 'back of shop' areas where preparations are carried out
- ensure that ordering methods are easy to carry out and the complaints system is effective.

Ordering:

- however small your business, use a menu, preferably a menu cycle which is controlled by standardised recipes
- consider the special ethnic or medical requirements of the people you are feeding. This does not just apply to the hospital service
- take into account the storage space available
- consider the best packaging size to help control, and match stock usage. Small packets of frozen foods may be better, even in a large scale catering operation, than the very large packages, which take longer to defrost
- take account of the skills and standards of your staff and the equipment you have available.

The analysis of recipes for their nutritional content is useful for the caterer and the customer. For instance this would be a vital part of hospital menu planning. There are computer programmes available which give a portion of a dish in terms of calories, grams of fat, fibre, salt and much more. These are however only approximate estimates and should be interpreted accordingly.

7 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

deciding quantity

Ordering small quantities can reduce the opportunity and value of discounts. On the other hand, large quantities may not be as economical as they first appear. If customer purchasing patterns vary unexpectedly, you may be left with slow moving stock that ties up storage space for a long period. And any product with a specified shelf life will have to be discarded if it is not consumed before the date shown. How much to purchase also depends on:

- patterns of use. Your stock control system will help identify these. With a cleaning agent it may be five litres per month during the summer when the hotel is busy, dropping to one litre per month in the off-season
- predicted future changes to the sales pattern. For example, the introduction and heavy marketing of a special weekend break may be expected to increase room occupancy and the number of meals which will be served in the restaurant
- changes to the sales pattern resulting from price increases. Significant increases are likely to depress sales of all the affected products but may increase sales of less expensive products and those which have not increased in price
- anticipated price movements. For instance rumours about the Chancellor's budget intentions may lead you to buy more of spirits to beat the increase in duty. Seasonal price changes should be taken into account when purchasing fresh products in particular. Strawberries for example, are generally very expensive at the start of the season and can be almost unobtainable during Wimbledon.

And for each item or group of items you should also consider:

- the delivery intervals. For instance, perishables may be required daily, cask conditioned beer weekly, spirits, paper goods and cleaning materials monthly and certain wines three monthly
- delay between ordering and delivery. For personalised stationery, for example, this may be several weeks, for fresh vegetables and fruit a few hours
- any allowance which is required for emergencies. In a luxury hotel, for example, it is not usually acceptable for menu items to run out, so some over-ordering is inevitable (and taken into account in the pricing policy).

Economic order quantities

Some large businesses use an economic order quantity system. This method takes account of:

- costs of ordering. This will include the time of the people who decide and place the order, deal with the delivery and with the paperwork: order forms, delivery notes, invoices, statements and so forth
- costs of storage. Storage space can be very expensive
- costs of storage equipment: initial purchase price, running costs and depreciation. This includes refrigerators, cold rooms, freezers and chillers
- insurance costs. Both equipment and stocks are usually insured against damage, breakdown and theft

In many small hotel and catering establishments the decision on how much to purchase is based on common sense and experience. The larger organisations use sophisticated computerised systems. Whatever the size of the business, the object is to carry enough stock to avoid running out, but also to avoid ordering too much, which increases storage costs and ties up cash.

The risks of theft and pilferage increase when extra quantities are stocked, especially if control is slack.

Emergency orders are an expensive solution to under-ordering or last minute changes. Petty cash purchases at local suppliers or high street shops can be very costly. Regular suppliers might charge extra for emergency delivery.

Staff who plan and organise special promotions should liaise with the person or department responsible for purchasing. Not only does this apply to food and beverage departments, but to housekeeping as well, as many more rooms may have to be cleaned and serviced than usual, and adequate stocks of table linen must be available for the restaurant.

earning power of funds tied up in stock. These could earn interest in a bank or building society. Say an establishment has an average of £1500 worth of stock throughout the year. If the same sum was invested in an account earning 12%, the interest payments would total £180.

The formula for working out economic order quantity is:

$$\text{Economic order quantity (in units)} = \sqrt{\frac{2 \times \text{order cost per order} \times \text{number of units used per year}}{\text{storage costs, per year, per unit}}}$$

Economic order quantities cannot be applied to fresh produce which needs to be delivered frequently irrespective of cost.

Using an example of soya oil: (a) estimated ordering cost, £2.00; (b) number of containers used per year, 35; (c) cost per container, £15.35; (d) storage cost per container: £1.84 (12% of £15.35)

$$\text{Economic order quantity} = \sqrt{\frac{2 \times £2.00 \times 35}{£1.84}} = 8.7 = 9 \text{ containers}$$

Working out economic order quantity

You need to know:

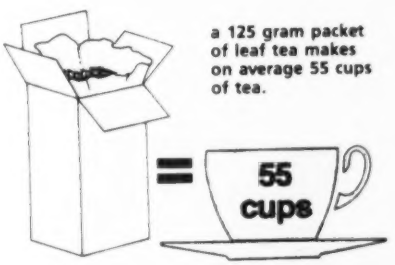
- order cost per order. This will vary depending on the size and complexity of the order but most large catering establishments can group the commodities they order and estimate the costs associated with the daily meat order, for example, by taking into account telephone charges, the time of the person making the call, time involved subsequently in checking the delivery, handling the paperwork
- number of units used per year. This is relatively easy to establish from stock taking figures
- storage costs, per year, per unit. This will depend on how much space the unit takes up and on any costs involved in keeping it refrigerated or frozen. It is generally accepted that annual storage costs are 12% of the actual value of dry goods and around 18% for items which have to be kept frozen. These figures will be higher in a city centre, for example, where property costs are more expensive.

Food yield tests

Some meats, poultry and fish weigh considerably less when prepared and even less after cooking. Therefore when considering how much to purchase, the quantity available to serve is the deciding factor. The recipe usually takes into account the eventual yield, but calculations can be thrown when the product purchased is of a slightly different specification to that used when the recipe was formulated. For example a recipe for beef goulash based on 200 g (8 oz) stewing meat per person will only produce an adequate quantity if the meat is lean. The yields of such products can be worked out by preparing a random sample of dishes in the normal way, and weighing at each stage. For example, for a joint which is to be roasted and carved: the original weight, the weight after trimming, the weight after cooking, the weight after carving.

When these types of product are being purchased, the order should be quite specific about the quality required. If this is not done, the quantity ordered may prove inadequate owing to a poorer than expected yield. Different caterers have different requirements, so suppliers cannot be expected to know automatically what quality a particular customer requires, even if the use is described.

The yield of canned and powdered products also has to be considered. For instance the number of peach halves in an A 2½ can will determine how many peach melbas can be produced. The number of portions of custard which can be made from a 3½ kg packet of custard will determine what should be ordered to make 500 servings. Such products as baked beans may show a variation in the consistency of the sauce and the ratio of sauce to beans.



a 125 gram packet of leaf tea makes on average 55 cups of tea.

a 250 gram pack of tea bags contains 80 tea bags, these make between 100 and 150 cups of tea, depending on how strong you like it.

8 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

stating your needs

The old saying that you only get what you ask for could never be more apt than when applied to purchasing. For the small operative these standards can be listed verbally, but are more binding in writing. Large organisations need the more sophisticated method of developing purchasing specifications for each item. The advantages are:

- Those involved in purchasing and using products are able to decide on the required standards in advance. There will be no need to make instant decisions at the market, for example, or under pressure from sales representatives.
- Distribution to different suppliers will allow them to quote competitive prices which reflect the specific requirements for that commodity.
- Those responsible for receiving the commodities will be able to recognise and check the standards required.
- Fewer misunderstandings arise with suppliers, which helps maintain good relations.
- The variety of purchases for the same product are reduced, making it easier to achieve a consistent standard.
- Your customers will recognise a consistent standard.
- The ordering procedure will often be quicker. The supplier knows exactly what is required.

Tina O'Regan plans the menus with her chef, using dishes which have proved acceptable, introducing new dishes as and when they consider it necessary.

Tina O'Regan is in charge of the food operation and 40-cover restaurant at the White Hart, a pub in Hertford. Her family were in the hotel business in Eire until the death of her parents. After working at the Great Southern Hotel in Galway for eight years and her marriage to Joey, the new couple went on a management training scheme with Mc Mullens Brewery in Hertford. They were placed as a husband and wife management team at the White Hart in 1989.

advice

from Tina O'Regan, White Hart

- Design your order book to reflect the range of commodities you require regularly. For example, list requirements under collective headings, meat, fish, dry goods and so forth, corresponding to the suppliers used. Tina finds this particularly useful when she and her husband have to be away from the pub. A temporary manager can easily establish what has to be ordered, referring to the menu record book to tie up the requirements with the particular selection of dishes to be offered.
- Help staff to help you. Tina has put up an order board so any member of the kitchen or service staff can make an immediate note of dry goods which need to be re-ordered. The board is mounted directly above the telephone, so it can be quickly checked when orders are placed.
- Find what suits you best. Tina orders dry goods on a fortnightly basis, from suppliers nominated by the brewery. Meat is ordered three or four times a week from a butcher selected by the brewery. Fish is purchased on a daily basis from a local supplier which Tina has selected. Vegetables and fruit are ordered from a nominated wholesale supplier, for delivery four times a week.
- Take advantage of seasonal offers, for example Christmas specials.
- Keep a good relationship with your suppliers. In return for demonstrating that she is a reliable purchaser, Tina expects her suppliers to keep to her required standards.

PURCHASE SPECIFICATION

A purchase specification should be written for each commodity. The task is time consuming at first, but having established your set of specifications, alterations are straightforward when you decide to purchase a new commodity or make adjustments to an existing product.

The amount of details in the specification will vary according to the nature of the commodity, and the type and size of the operation. These are the basic details:

- Name of the commodity and if necessary a concise description.
- Intended use.
- Purchasing unit. This may be size — for example A10 for canned fruit salad, per square metre for carpeting; weight — by kilo or pound, or smaller units for costly products like caviar; volume — by litre or gallon or smaller units; or a well understood description — for example magnum (150 cl of wine; equivalent to two standard bottles).
- Grade: where one has been established by government, European Community regulations, the industry concerned, consumer bodies or marketing organisations.

The Meat and Livestock Commission operates a classification scheme for beef, lamb and pork (see units 6 and 15). The Tea Council has a Catering Tea Grading Scheme (see units 6 and 28), wine growers in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal, for example, have to comply with strict EC-approved labelling laws that indicate the quality of the wine (see unit 27).

- Origin: the country of origin helps to indicate quality and price. You may object to foods packed in certain countries with a poor reputation for quality or an unacceptable political regime.
- Quality (if not already covered by the statement on acceptable grade). Descriptions should be clear, simple, realistic and focus on easily observable, testable features. With some products it will be necessary to specify the variety by name. Potatoes require careful selection for each particular use and market. A Désirée or Cara will produce a good roast or jacket potato, whereas a Maris Piper will be especially good for boiling, mashing and for chips. This would have to be mentioned if only one specification is drawn up for potatoes.
- Preparation required: this would apply to meat or fish, for example.
- Price quote: maximum or minimum orders; whether per box, bottle, lb., kilo, single unit.
- Delivery: time after receipt of order, and any specific distribution places.
- Date.

There is no need for purchase specifications to repeat the basic rules or principles of effective purchasing. It should always be understood, for example, that broken stock on delivery, misleading or inadequately labelled products will be returned.

Blanket specification

Blends	Two alternative blends are required: a:70% pure new wool 30% nylon b:100% pure new wool
British Standard	The blankets should conform to BS3121 – naturally flame resistant.
Finish of ends	Bound one end with nylon taffeta ribbon, double stitched. Wool whipped other end. *Alternatively* Bound both ends with nylon taffeta ribbon double stitched.
Cleaning	All products submitted must be machine washable.

Sizes, weights and constructions

Cms	Ins	Gms
178 x 229	70" x 90"	1500
230 x 250	90" x 98"	2050

Warp ends	Weft ends
16 per inch	21 per inch
16 per inch	21 per inch

Mattress pads

90 x 190 cms
150 x 200 cms

In some operations, purchase specifications are determined centrally, individual units are only permitted to order products which meet those requirements. In other instances they are irrelevant, for example draught beer in a tenanted pub, or inappropriate, for example when ordering a particular wine, say Chateaux Margaux 1980.

9 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

identifying and selecting suppliers

The objective in selecting your suppliers is to obtain the quality, service and price you seek at the greatest convenience to yourself. The first step is to draw up a description of the goods you are seeking suppliers for. For a new business this will include every item. For an established business, it will include additional items required for a new dish on the menu, for example, or to clean a new leisure centre, or to re-equip a banqueting suite. The search for a new supplier might also be sparked off by dissatisfaction with an existing supplier, or a change in business strategy, requiring cost savings.

The second step is to be clear about what you are looking for from your supplier.

- Prices quoted are competitive for the goods specified, in relation to the quality required.
- The goods available are of the required quality for your business needs and for your customers.
- The goods offered are of the correct size, weight and grade.
- The frequency of the delivery service suits your requirements, and emergency arrangements are set out.
- The minimum and maximum quantities are suited to your storage capabilities and financial constraints.
- The payment terms are clear and acceptable, with an appropriate period before payment is required, and, possibly discounts for prompt payment.

The third step is to establish contact with potential suppliers. In some cases they will already be known to you — local companies, national companies who are practically household names, perhaps the advertisements of a particular supplier have caught your eye. You may have been sent catalogues and price lists. At a trade exhibition you may have visited the supplier's stand, attracted by the display. This could lead to contact with senior members of the supplier's sales department. In some cases, a supplier may invite you to visit the premises - or you have already visited the premises on a trip organised by the local branch of your trade or professional association.

SMALL COMPANIES

If you are the owner or manager of a small, private hotel, pub or restaurant, one of your main supply sources could be local cash and carry outlets. Among the advantages of cash and carry outlets are their:

- competitive prices
- accessibility — visits can be made frequently at a time to suit yourself
- wide and varied range of products, all on display to ease your selection
- lack of restrictions — most products can be purchased in whatever quantity you need, no matter how small.

However you, or a member of your staff, will have to spend time on the journey to the cash and carry, making the selection, loading and unloading the vehicle.

The objective in selecting your suppliers is to obtain the quality, service and price you seek at the greatest convenience to yourself.

In some instances, local suppliers are the best option.

Suppliers accredited under British Standards 5750 have met rigorous quality standards laid down by the British Standards Institute. They are inspected twice a year to ensure these standards are kept up.

Generally purchases must be paid for at the time they are made, there is restricted availability of some goods, and less personal service.

It is likely that your requirements for bread, meat, fish, fruit and vegetables can be met by local suppliers and markets. In some rural areas, suppliers call with a selection of such items displayed in their van.

Local shops may deliver to you, but usually it will be at their convenience, not yours. With a local wholesaler, you may be required to order more than you need of some commodities. This increases your storage costs particularly for frozen foods and may lead to waste. On the other hand some local shops need large orders to support the fluctuating trade by the general public, and in return for your business offer attractive terms which you can take advantage of for selected items.

Like these shopkeepers, market traders have a local reputation to keep. You can be selective over quality and price and negotiate on the spot.

Van sales offer great convenience, bringing the shop to your door, as it were. If the delivery is frequent and reliable, stock levels can be kept to the minimum. However, you may miss out if weather conditions prevent your regular delivery, the range of items will be limited, prices will be less competitive, especially if your supplier takes advantage of the near-monopoly position he or she is in.

LARGER COMPANIES

Most large companies will in some instances also buy from markets, local shops and cash and carry outlets. Indeed local sources may be the only option, for example for regional specialities or certain varieties of fresh fish.

For the bulk of their purchases, large companies will deal with national distributors and suppliers. This may be on a contract basis, after inviting selected suppliers to tender. If these companies have a number of subsidiary units, or are themselves part of a much larger organisation such as a local authority, then individual units may be required to purchase from suppliers nominated by head office. For example, in schools or hospitals, the catering officer will order all meat from a particular company. In a hotel group, the food and beverage manager could be required to purchase a particular commodity from a supplier that the company has nominated.

These suppliers may originally have been selected on a tender basis and have been awarded a contract for a certain number of years. In other cases, the supplier is actually a subsidiary company.

Tendering

A number of suppliers — typically three — are asked to submit quotations, from which the purchaser can select the one that offers the best value, reliability and service. Those invited to tender are sent detailed information, usually in the form of a purchasing specification (see unit 8). While this process is time consuming, it has three main advantages:

- competitive prices
- more assured availability of supplies
- greater confidence that the standards you have specified will be met.

Contract purchasing

The supplier agrees to supply a particular item or items for a certain period of time, usually at an agreed price. A contract gives you stability, particularly against inflation. It will normally cover:

- delivery arrangements
- quality and quantity, which may include minimum order quantities
- terms of acceptable substitutes
- procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory quality
- invoicing and payment.

Nominated supplier

Commodities are to be ordered through a particular supplier, for example, all dry goods to be purchased through Booker Fitch.

The advantage of the nominated supplier system is that head office can negotiate substantial discounts, determine the quality to be supplied and insist on good service. Some large companies give their unit managers a choice of two or three nominated suppliers for certain commodities, for example fruit and vegetables. This enables the unit manager to choose on the basis of who offers the best delivery.

10 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

getting the best from your suppliers

Good communication techniques between you and your supplier open the channels from the negotiation stage through ordering and receiving, to dealing with any problems. From the outset, your enthusiastic and sincere attitude will establish a two-way relationship which will help you and your supplier to succeed. You rely on your supplier to know what you want, therefore clarity and precision are of the utmost importance, especially when ordering by telephone. If you do not place the order personally, describe your standards fully to the member of staff who does.

memo

- Make sure your suppliers know your target market
- Give your suppliers advance information about any changes
- Discuss and solve problems without delay
- Encourage competition among suppliers
- Seek information on new products
- Give feedback on supplier standards to promote continued goodwill

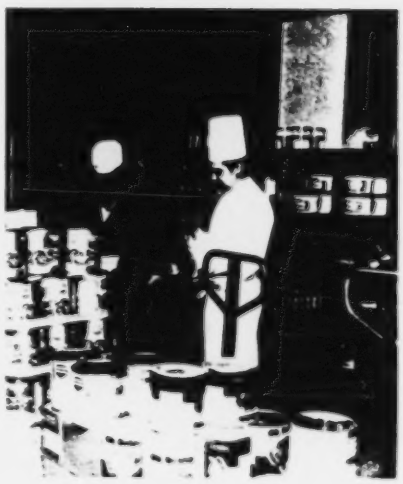
Your market

Your supplier needs to know your market, as well as the quality you have specified. Discuss your objectives with a senior representative of your selected supplier, who can then make sure that the staff members who deal with your orders are informed. Marks and Spencer's high reputation for quality was not instant: it resulted from good relations with suppliers over a period of time. M&S suppliers must involve all their employees, from the production team to the packaging and delivery staff, in a common goal to achieve and sustain the required standards.

Changing needs

Any changes to your stated requirements should be given to your suppliers in plenty of time and in such a manner that they are clear about what you need. You must:

- give your supplier the time to find the new product
- give the new product enough time for assessment before changing again
- allow for changes in delivery times as the supplier's schedule for serving other customers can be affected



Problem solving

Problems cannot be solved without each side coming together to identify them and agree a solution satisfactory to all parties. Remember the person on the end of the telephone in the supplier's order office is only carrying out instructions — so if you feel particularly strongly about the problem, save your anger for the manager or supervisor!

- Give a clear and accurate description of the fault. The person can then refer to your order and to any previously established written specification.
- Allow the supplier the chance to correct the fault.
- If the replacement is urgently required, say so, and give the supplier a realistic time limit. Remember you may not be able to get a replacement any quicker yourself.
- Finish on a friendly, but firm note.
- If you are still not satisfied, take the matter further with a more senior member of the supplier's staff.

SEEDLESS?!!!
MY BOARDERS ARE STILL PICKING THEIR TEETH AFTER MY FRUIT SALAD!
MADAM, I CAN'T PERSONALLY EXAMINE EVERY SINGLE GRAPE...
SEEDLESS GRAPES

Other suppliers

Competition is healthy. Keep yourself up-to-date on the standards and prices of other suppliers. Use this knowledge to continue to get the best from your selected supplier. You will earn your supplier's respect for your business methods.

If you feel justified, do not hesitate to switch from one supplier to another. Doing so may cause a hiccup in your purchasing system, but it will also create a strong impact on your other suppliers and potential suppliers. It keeps them on their best behaviour.

New products

Information on new products will usually be forthcoming from your supplier. You should also take independent steps to keep yourself informed by reading magazine articles, newspaper stories, government publications, and from radio and television coverage.

Guides are available which describe food quality standards (see unit 6):

Food from Britain, 301-344 Market Towers, New Covent Garden Market, London SW8 5NQ, tel: 071-720 2144 produce a two-part publication which covers agricultural and horticultural produce and fresh, lightly-processed and speciality foods.

The *Caterer and Hotelkeeper*, published every Thursday and available from good newsagents, publishes articles on food standards as well as current prices and reviews of supplier's products.

The British Food Information Service (at the same address as Food from Britain) will supply literature.

Performance review

When reviewing the performance of your suppliers, you should make careful comparisons between them. One way of doing this is to draw up a simplified points table on which the more important aspects are potentially awarded the most points. Points are deducted for deviations in standards.

Each rating could be qualified by an explanation of lost points, with the dates and full details listed. Such information is of future use if a change of supplier is necessary. The supplier would know exactly which areas were at fault and could rectify them before such a drastic step was taken.

	Supplier A	Supplier B
Quality	20	20
Price	20	20
Punctual deliveries	20	15
Paperwork efficiency	20	18
Communication skills	20	9
After sales techniques	20	20
Total	120	82

11 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

negotiating

Setting the scene

The purchaser has the right to choose the location, timing and negotiating channel. This could be by telephone, or face-to-face, which may require a visit to your local market to talk to a stallholder, or a local shop for discussion with the manager or owner.

You could decide to hold the meeting on your premises, or it may be to your advantage to visit the supplier's facilities, where you could meet other senior employees and pick up further information. Either way, having the choice allows you to take charge and be in control.

List all the points for negotiation. Whether these are for discussion with a local supplier or at a formal meeting with a national supplier, it is fairer to let the supplier have the list or agenda in advance to allow time for him or her to plan. The supplier may want to change the order of the discussion, to add further points, to suggest others are dropped.

Check that the person or persons you will be negotiating with, have the authority to make decisions for their company.

Make sure that the arrangements for the meeting are right. Is the time convenient? If you are hosting the discussions on your premises, ensure the room is comfortable, that your staff are fully briefed, and that you will not be interrupted (unless it is at a pre-arranged signal).

Negotiating is one key link in the supply chain, which leads to your customers getting value for money. You must be objective in your targets for quality control, deliveries, returns, payment, credit and discount terms.

During discussions

Enter the discussion with the idea that both sides should win: the win-win approach. With the win-lose approach, one party gains a sense of satisfaction while the other feels deflated. This risks the whole negotiation, when both sides end up losers: the lose-lose scenario.

Don't accept the first offer, or make the first concession.

Use your selling skills to outline your needs, while at the same time incorporating the supplier's needs. Make the supplier feel that any concession is of mutual benefit. For example, if you need an early delivery time for a particular commodity, you may have to pay more, and you may also have to arrange a different place of delivery to suit the supplier's transport timetables.

Offer solutions to the supplier's problems. For example, you may be required to collect certain items from the supplier direct, or from another of the supplier's customers. If this is the only way to obtain a particular item, you may consider the time and effort worthwhile in satisfying your customers' needs.

Agree over replacement items, if the one you ordered is out of stock, or if you would accept a similar commodity on approval. Otherwise, wait for the original item to be available.

Prices can be decided using the supplier's costs as a basis. You may be able to suggest ways of reducing these costs. For example, you may know of a different source for a commodity that the supplier could use. Large businesses can negotiate directly with manufacturers to obtain lower prices on volume lines. These so-called 'third party deals' will include a charge for distribution by the supplier.

Payment deadline, credit and discount terms can be negotiated to reflect both your and the supplier's financial constraints. For some items, it may be cheaper to buy direct from a local supplier who offers discounts for cash. For others retrospective discounts may be appropriate. These are geared to eventual purchase levels, with certain trigger points. For example:

- normal discount: 10 per cent
- £100,000 to £150,000 worth of goods: 11 per cent
- above £150,000: 11.5 per cent.

Most large suppliers have computerised systems and can supply the customer with statistical support. For example, a breakdown of purchases made by a particular unit, or an analysis of purchases over a specific period. This would help caterers without a computer system negotiate the best terms for their circumstances.

Reaching agreement

At regular intervals during the meeting, sum up the points which you have discussed. This helps to keep the negotiation to your original objectives and it shows the supplier that you are an organised person to deal with.

Agree how performance can be monitored. The supplier can then expect an on-going inspection of standards for quality of the products, delivery, prices and the administration of your account. You will also be liable for keeping to your side of the contract, such as the ordering and payment terms.

Wording of any agreements will need to be carefully examined before making decisions. This may delay the final stages, if legal advice is required.

Review periods for the agreement should also be decided. During the life of the agreement, both sides should note and collect points to be agreed or disputed in the future.

Confidence, commitment, courtesy and clear communication are all essential ingredients for effective negotiations.

THEY'RE NOT RIPE – HOW ABOUT MAKING IT 50P?
Tomatoes 65P lb
COST ME AN ARM & A LEG AT MARKET, SQUIRE! CAN'T GO BELOW 58P
I'LL TAKE TWO CASES IF YOU'LL MAKE IT 55P
DONE!
McNeill

12 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

contracts

A business contract is a legally binding agreement between two or more persons, which states the obligations of each individual, and involves an offer by one person and an acceptance by another. In purchasing, the contract concerns the supply of goods or performance of work at a certain price.

A contract does not have to be in writing. A verbal contract with your suppliers is legally binding.

You must examine all the points to be included before entering into the contract to protect your interests and those of your supplier.

The contract should state:

- what goods or services it relates to, with details of quality and quantities
- the price at which these goods or services will be supplied. Discount terms vary, some suppliers offer around 2½ per cent off list prices to regular customers, while large companies can get 7½ to 10 per cent discount. In deciding the level of discount the supplier will consider the level of service the customer requires and the overall value of the order. Special clauses may be necessary for imported goods, to cover price changes that are totally outside the supplier's control, for example as a result of currency fluctuations. But even in these cases you can negotiate a price hold on a short-term basis, specifically agreeing the intervals, or the frequency at which prices can be adjusted: say every three months, or not more than four times a year
- the delivery arrangements including time, method, place, delivery acceptance procedure and method for return of goods. You may decide to include an indemnity clause to cover loss or damage of goods in transit
- invoicing or payment procedures and credit terms. Invoices become payable on a stated date in the month following the month of delivery, or within a specified number of days
- the period of the contract: a year or longer for some goods, as short as a week or month for perishables
- the status of the supplier. Some large companies have as many as three national contracts for the supply of tea, coffee, vending products, fats and oils and similar products. This leaves its unit managers with some power to choose the best supplier for each circumstance. Sole supplier status can lead to complacency, so many contracts retain the option to remove sole status when the contract is re-negotiated
- the disputes or grievance procedure which either side must follow in the event of a difficulty
- the conditions and procedure for terminating, reviewing and renewing the contract — by either party. After all, the supplier may not be happy with an aspect of the purchaser's ordering, receiving and payment methods, and if the grounds for complaint meet certain predetermined criteria, can claim breach of contract against the purchaser
- legal liability exemptions. The Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977 protects the purchaser against unfair use of such an exclusion clause.

If you are a first-time purchaser get legal advice before entering any agreement with your supplier, whether verbal or written. Do not rely on the custom and practice assumed in gentlemen's agreements.

Some companies establish national contracts with two or three suppliers and leave unit managers to choose the best supplier for their circumstances.

Implied terms

Implied terms which apply to the purchaser and supplier are clarified in the Sale of Goods and Services Act 1982:

1

The goods must conform to the description given or to the sample made available.

2

The goods must be of a saleable quality excepting where defects have been drawn to the purchaser's attention, or where the purchaser has examined the goods.

3

The goods are fit for the purpose, where a purchaser or hirer has made the purpose known.

4

The supplier of a service must carry out the service with reasonable care.

5

Where no time or charge for the supply of a service has been specified, the service must nevertheless be performed in a reasonable time, at a reasonable cost; but both parties can exclude this by agreement, using, what is called 'a test of reasonableness'.

A verbal contract with your suppliers is legally binding

The law of agency

Another party is involved in the contract when the seller or buyer is represented by an agent. The law of agency applies in such cases. For example, if a wholesaler supplies goods to a retailer, who in turn supplies them to you, and they are not delivered or are faulty, you as the purchaser can sue the retailer.

But if the retailer is acting as the wholesaler's agent in selling the goods to you, the purchaser, you would sue the wholesaler for breach of contract.

Say you purchase bulk flour from your supplier, who is acting as an agent for this commodity for the wholesaler. A customer complains after finding an insect in her apple tart. The batch of flour is found to have moth grubs. Your famous pastries cannot be made, your reputation is harmed, your regular customers are disappointed. You sue the wholesaler for supplying faulty goods (in this case unsafe food) to your supplier, who delivered it to you, while acting as an agent.

13 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

hygiene, safety and the law

FOOD LAWS

The Food Safety Act 1990 placed the responsibility for food safety on each link within the food production chain. The Act also:

- specifies in much wider terms the food safety requirements. 'Food' means almost anything that is eaten, drunk or chewed, and is assumed to be for human consumption until the opposite is proved. Food fails to comply with the food safety requirements if it has been made injurious to health, or is unfit for human consumption, or is so contaminated that it would be unreasonable to expect it to be eaten or drunk in that state
- greatly strengthened the powers of enforcement officers
- introduced much tougher penalties for food offences
- permits the irradiation of food under licence. Regulations require irradiated food or dishes containing irradiated food to be clearly labelled at all stages, from transportation and storage, to sale and consumption
- requires premises where food is stored, prepared or sold to be registered with the local authority – Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991. New businesses must register at least 28 days before opening (forms available from the environmental health department).

A further provision of the 1990 Act (still the subject of consultation in 1992) relates to the compulsory hygiene training of food handlers.

The Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990 introduced strict (and complex) new temperature controls for certain foods.

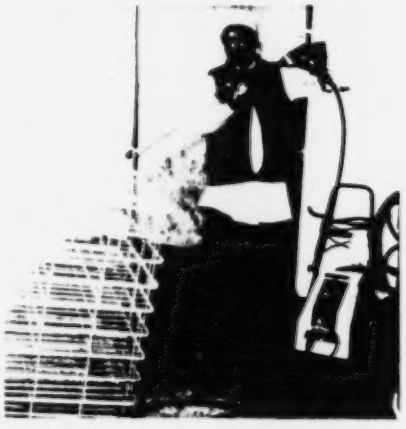
- High risk foods must be stored at not more than 8°C (5°C from 1 April 1993), or, if cooked and waiting to be served hot, not less than 63°C. Items covered include soft cheeses ripened by the action of moulds or other microorganisms, various cooked products, smoked or cured meat which has been cut or sliced after smoking, desserts made with milk or milk substitute, vegetable salads (including those containing fruit).
- High risk products which are sold within a specified time of production are exempt, such as quiches and cream cakes (2 hours), sandwiches (4 hours), cooked sausage rolls (same day), uncooked baked egg and milk pastry products (24 hours), cooked pies and pasties, provided they have nothing added to them after baking (within 2 days).
- The food temperature controls do not apply, for example, to bread, biscuits, cakes, dry, dehydrated or canned foods, uncooked bacon and ham.

The Food Labelling Regulations 1984 apply to all food which is sold for immediate consumption, but not sandwiches, filled rolls and other bread products, hot food, and food sold from a vending machine which the customer will heat. However such foods must be described on a prominently displayed notice near the point of sale. The name of the food must be properly described on menus. Health claims and misleading descriptions are not allowed.

Food labels must indicate: the name of the food; ingredients, including additives — this is particularly useful to those customers who have allergies to certain

The Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1970 ensure that food is protected from contamination by:

- raw and cooked food being kept separate during preparation
- during sales or delivery, open food being covered or effectively screened
- food handlers using hygienic work methods
- food handlers observing personal hygiene rules.



Good hygiene and safety standards will enhance your reputation. On the other hand, the bad publicity arising from a case of food poisoning, or an accident involving a staff member can seriously damage your business. Ignorance of the law is no defence.

The Food Hygiene (Market Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations 1966, as amended by the Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990, cover the hygiene of vending machines and any vehicles you or your supplier might use to transport food to other premises. They also specify the minimum temperatures at which the food must be kept in vending machines and delivery vehicles.

foods and additives ; use-by or best before date (sell-by dates have been phased out); any special storage instructions.

The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food Regulations 1987 apply to the manufacture, sale, import and use of materials and articles intended to come into contact with food, for example tin foil, cling wrap, plastic and cellophane. The label on the product will state that it is suitable for food use.

Suppliers and manufacturers have a legal responsibility for articles and substances for use at work, to ensure that they are safe in design. This covers the carrying out of safety tests, the supply of sufficient information and instructions, revised as and when necessary.

SAFETY LAWS

The provisions of the Offices Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963 apply to businesses which sell food or drink for immediate consumption to members of the public; and to staff restaurants, dining rooms and so forth, maintained in conjunction with the office, factory or shop premises, to supply food and drink for immediate consumption by employees. The Act lays down certain requirements covering the safety of premises, fixtures and fittings, including cleanliness, ventilation, lighting, temperature of work areas, provision of toilets and washrooms, drinking water, lockers for outdoor clothes, seating and eating areas, fire procedures and the use of dangerous machinery:

- no untrained or unauthorised person can use prescribed dangerous machines
- under 18's must not clean machines, the moving parts of which, when exposed, may cause injury.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 protects everyone at work and everyone affected by the work. It lays down the *employer's* responsibilities to provide:

- safe plant and systems of work
- arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- information, instruction and training, as necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees.

Employees also have responsibilities under the Act to:

- take care of the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
- co-operate with the employer or anyone else who may have legal responsibilities
- refrain from intentionally or recklessly interfering with anything required by law and provided in the interests of safety.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 — known as COSHH — affect the purchaser and the supplier of such substances. The regulations require employers to carry out an assessment of hazardous substances which employees may come into contact with in the workplace, whether they are solid, liquid, gas, vapour, fume or dust (see unit 30, *Cleaning materials*). (On request, your supplier should provide detailed information on the substances you purchase.)

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985, cover accidents arising out of or in connection with work, if they are fatal, cause a major injury or incapacitate a person for more than three consecutive days. All such injuries must be reported to the local environmental health department by the quickest means possible. Form F2508, available from HMSO, must also be completed and sent in within 7 days.

The Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989 requires employers to display a poster, or distribute leaflets informing employees of their general requirements under the health and safety laws. Local addresses of the health and safety enforcing authority must also be shown.

14 THE PURCHASING FUNCTION

evaluating purchasing

Evaluation of purchasing is a two-way process. It looks back at past performance and looks forward to improved productivity. It takes into account changes in customer needs and methods of meeting those needs, including new product developments. The purchasing function has to keep pace with the rest of the business.

The steps in evaluating your purchasing function may involve everyone in the purchasing team. You should first decide on the timescale between assessments — three monthly or six monthly or yearly (unless problems dictate an earlier review), and the depth of the investigation. You might decide to compare purchasing costs against targets each month, and make a deeper analysis every six months, or if the variance on budget is more than 15 per cent, for example.

The purchasing function has to keep pace with changes in customer needs...

Step 1

Assess performance by comparing results against objectives. To do this you need to isolate specific, measurable elements, ideally built into the purchasing process from the start. For instance a hospital caterer might aim to provide:

- three meals a day within a cost of £x.xx per patient
- the nutritional requirements of patients
- special dietary food for patients as required
- choice of Y main course items per meal, of which two are hot dishes
- meals which the patient has chosen earlier the same day.

Step 2

Investigate reasons for the variations. Overall costs may have risen purely as a result of market changes or for more complex reasons leading to fluctuations in your supplier's charges. It is also possible that costs were reduced, without any lowering of standards. Examine your purchasing methods for weaknesses. If you are a large organisation, is your purchasing manager, or department at fault? Communications within your organisation and, or with your supplier might not be effective. Possibly procedures are not being followed correctly. Any weak link in the chain can cause a serious problem. Relationships within your company may be affecting relationships within your supplier's company, and vice versa.

Step 3

Decide on corrective action. Meet with your supplier, on an informal one-to-one basis, or at a more formal meeting, to discuss basic problems. If the problems cannot be corrected easily, by the party or parties at fault, you might have to go back to the negotiating stage or set a target date by which time certain improvements have to be made. Consider visiting your supplier's premises, particularly if you did not do so during the original selection. When you meet the ordering staff, your discussion may identify problems not revealed in the original analysis. Perhaps the supplier does not have the capacity or equipment to meet your demands. On your visit you may find that the cleanliness, efficiency and general standard of the supplier's organisation warrants immediate cancellation of the contract.

Step 4

Re-examine your original objectives to set a more realistic level, possibly more in keeping with your target market and your cash flow. You might decide to tighten quality by:

- deciding that inferior supplies will not be allowed
- not accepting price adjustments to compensate for sub-standard quality
- asking your supplier to make suggestions to improve quality
- re-writing your specifications.

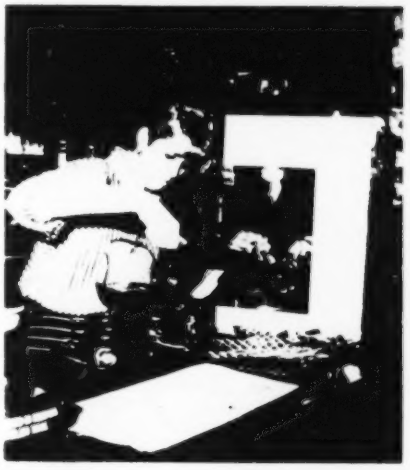
You might decide to:

- adjust minimum and maximum stock levels
- monitor wastage during production
- monitor the life of perishable items
- increase the price you charge to reflect more satisfactorily the price you pay
- put pressure on the supplier to lower prices you pay
- limit emergency orders to a specified number per year
- limit late deliveries by the supplier to a specified number per year, above this number would automatically trigger a renegotiation of the contract
- no longer accept early deliveries for your supplier's convenience
- add new protective rules to ensure good standards for quality, quantity, delivery, administration and costs, using new specifications or guidelines which incorporate tighter standards
- develop new ways of matching orders and stocks with fluctuations in demand from your customers.

Your purchasing evaluation exercise may cause you to change supplier. Before taking this step, make sure you consider all the implications.

- Will alternative suppliers provide an acceptable standard of service and value for money?
- Check the credentials of alternative companies even if they have exciting new ideas and methods. What is their track record and reputation?

... and it has to keep pace with changes in methods of meeting those needs



15 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

meat

Meat should smell fresh, not rancid. Whole carcass should be compact and evenly fleshed.

Beef

- Lean meat should be bright red, with a smooth texture, the outer surface purple/brown. Small flecks or veins of white fat (marbling) should be present in prime cuts. The coarser textured cuts are better slow cooked.

- The outer fat should be even, smooth in texture, firm to the touch and creamy-white in colour.

Veal

- Flesh should be pale pink and firm, not soft and flabby; cut surfaces moist, not dry; little fat covering. Fat should be firm and pinkish with the kidneys firm and well covered with fat.

- Bones should be pinkish white, porous and have small amounts of blood in their structure.

Lamb and mutton

- Lean flesh of lamb should be firm, dull red, with a fine texture or grain. Lamb bones should be porous and have a slight bluish tinge. Mutton is a darker red and slightly coarser in texture. Only animals under one year should be described as lamb.

- Fat should be evenly distributed, hard, brittle, flaky and clear white in colour.

Pork

- Skin or rind should be smooth; flesh lean, pale pink, firm, with little gristle; fat white, firm, smooth and not excessive.

- Bones should be small, fine and pinkish/blue.

Bacon

- No sign of stickiness. Thin, smooth and wrinkle-free rind.

- White, smooth fat that is not excessive in proportion to the lean. Meat is a deep pink colour and firm.

Ham

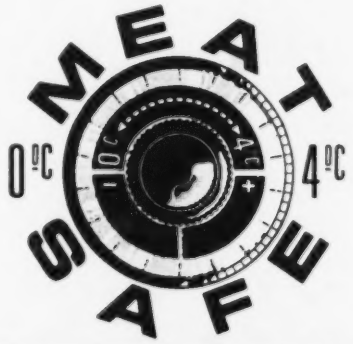
Meat is pink, moist, but not sticky; fat firm, white and not excessive.

According to records of 2400 BC, beef was buried with the dead of ancient Egypt to provide food for the journey to the other world. Traces of sheep have been carbon dated at about 5500 BC in central India. Lamb sacrifices were made over 2500 years ago in China.

The saying 'save the bacon' dates back some 400 years ago, when it is thought to have referred to the precautions taken each winter to preserve salted bacon from the wild dogs.

Married couples in Dunmow, Essex were given a side of bacon if they had stayed together without quarrelling for 12 months. The reward became known as 'Bringing home the bacon'.

During the 100 years it took to build York Minster there was a profusion of oak chippings and sawdust. They were used to smoke ham, and York ham has been popular ever since.



RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM STORAGE TIMES FOR MEAT

UNCOOKED	IN A FRIDGE	COOKED	IN A FRIDGE
Joints of Beef, Pork or Lamb	3 days	Joints	3 days
		Casseroles	2 days
Bacon Rashers	7 days	Ham	2 days
Minced Meat	1 day	Meat Pies	1 day
Offal	1 day	Sliced Meat	2 days
		Pate	2 days
Sausages	3 days	Stock	2-3 days

It is vital for safety and quality, that food is stored at the correct temperature and for the correct time. Always check the label of manufactured food for any storage advice.

30

KNOW YOUR MEAT

Beef

Roasting: sirloin, topside, wing rib, forerib. *Pot roast*: brisket, thin and thick ribs, top rump and silverside. *Braising*: thin and thick ribs, top rump, chuck and blade.

Salted or boiled: brisket, silverside. *Mince*: neck and clod, thin flank, plus leaner cuts if required. Both stewing and mince are purchased by visual lean percentage: for example 80 per cent VL means 80 per cent red meat and 20 per cent fat.

Stewing: neck and clod, chuck and blade, top rump.

Grilled or fried: rump, sirloin, fillet, thin sliced top rump, boned and sliced wing rib steaks.

Veal

Roasting: boned shoulder, oyster and breast. *Stewing*: neck, clod, shin and knuckle. *Grilling and frying*: loin, rump, top rump, topside and silverside.

Lamb and mutton

Roasting: loin, chump, bone and stuffed breast, leg, best end of neck and shoulder. *Braising*: middle neck, scrag and shank end.

Boiled or stewed: scrag and middle neck.

Grilled or fried: leg steaks, loin, chump and best end of neck.

Pork

Roasting: neck end (blade bone and spare rib), hand and spring, belly, leg, loin and tenderloin. *Braising*: neck end.

Stewing: neck end, hand and spring.

Grilled or fried: spare rib chops, belly slices, leg, loin and chump chops and tenderloin.

Bacon

Baking: middle gammon, middle or through cut.

Boiling: corner gammon, middle gammon, prime forehock, prime collar, prime streaky, thick cuts of prime back, middle or throughcut. *Braising*: middle gammon, prime collar and prime back. *Casseroles*: gammon hock and prime forehock. *Soups and pies*: gammon hock.

Frying and grilling: middle gammon, prime collar, prime streaky, prime back, middle or throughcut.

Speciality hams

York — firm, tender and mellow-flavoured.

Bradenham — firm, tender and darker coloured from the coating of spices, juniper berries and molasses.

Cumberland — cured with old ale, molasses, vinegar, salt and sugar.

Cumbria — herbs are added during the curing process, air dried for a minimum of 12 months, sliced very thinly and eaten uncooked.

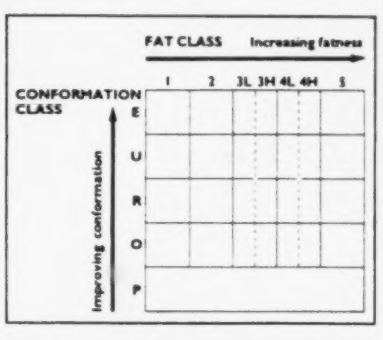
Parma — is air dried, delicate flavoured, sliced very thinly, uncooked.

Chipnam — a 'green' ham, cured but not smoked.

The MLC has developed a technique which involves completely deboning the sides of lamb to produce rolled joints or steaks.

A new range of boneless, lean pork cuts has also been developed in response to public demand for leaner meat.

The MLC operates a classification system for beef, lamb and pork. It is based on muscle structure (conformation) and fat covering. An optical probe is used to measure fat and muscle depths.



16 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

poultry, game and offal

There should be no sign of damage to the skin or flesh, except in the case of game when signs of shot, for example, are inevitable. Young birds are generally more tender and full of flavour.

Chicken

- The breast should be plump and firm and the breast bone pliable.
- The skin should be white, with faint bluish colour.
- The legs should be smooth, with small scales and spurs.

Turkey

- The breast should be large, with no stickiness on the skin.
- The legs of young birds are black, smooth, and the feet are supple with a short spur. If the legs are reddish grey, scaly, and hard, the bird is old.

Game

- The two outer flight feathers are more pointed in younger birds, other than pheasants. Pheasant and grouse should have plump breasts, the feet are coarser and duller in older birds. Cock birds have larger spurs.
- The ears of a young hare should tear easily, the older the animal, the more cracked and yellow the teeth. A young rabbit should be plump, have small teeth, smooth claws and the ears tear easily.
- Venison meat should be dark and close grained, the fat white and firm.

Offal

- Liver should have little, if any smell and an attractive colour, without tubes or dryness.
- Kidneys should be deep red in colour and smell fresh. If possible keep kidneys in their suet until required.
- Heart should look and smell fresh and not have excessive fat or tubes. Sweetbreads should be a creamy white in colour, with a pleasant smell.
- Tongue must be clean, smell fresh and not have excessive waste at the root end. It can be supplied cured.
- Oxtail should have creamy-white fat and bright red flesh, with the tail segmented through the cartilage discs.

Quality British Chicken (QBC) was established in 1984. Only Grade A chickens, including stuffed whole birds and portions, qualify for the mark. Polyphosphates are not permitted in any chicken with the QBC mark.

Quantities of game

Allow 2 to 3 snipe, wood pigeon, partridge, teal, quail or woodcock per person; half or whole grouse. One mallard will serve 2 to 3, a hen pheasant 3, and a cock, 4. An average wild goose serves 6, a rabbit 3 to 4 persons and a hare 6 to 8 persons.

65 to 70 per cent of ducks available are frozen oven-ready. They should be damage free and the covering intact. Allow approximately: 1 1/2 lb per person for smaller ducks; 1 lb per person for larger ducks.

Some of the earliest records of domestic fowls date back to 3200 BC in India. The Han Dynasty in China bred white ducks for the table as early as 168 BC. The Romans were experts at rearing poultry. Chicken meat, dung and chicken fat were used in medicines. Goose fairs are mentioned in 13th century records. Turkeys were known to the Aztecs who domesticated them.

The ancient Egyptians developed a method of preserving game birds so they could be eaten some time later. The Romans introduced pheasants into Britain, yet they thought quail were a danger to health. In Norman times, deer were the property of the King. Poaching was punishable by death or mutilation.

In the Middle Ages offal was considered to cause ill humour.

KNOW YOUR POULTRY

Spring chicken are from 4 to 6 weeks old and can be roasted, pot-roasted or grilled.

Small roasting chickens are 3 to 4 months old and can be roasted, pot-roasted and grilled.

Medium roasting chickens are broilers and are prime, tender birds which can be used for sautés, pies, suprêmes, roasting, grilling and pot-roasting.

Large roasting or boiling birds are fully grown and can be roasted or boiled.

Capons are birds which have been specially treated (caponised) to produce a large, tender roasting chicken.

Boiling fowls are old hens which have finished laying eggs.

Ducklings are normally 7 weeks old.

KNOW YOUR GAME

Pheasant — hang for 3 to 5 days, use for roasting, braising or pot-roasting.

Partridge — hang for 3 to 5 days, use for roasting or braising.

Grouse — hang for 5 to 7 days, use for roasting.

Woodcock and snipe — hang for 3 to 4 days, roast birds with the liver and heart left inside.

Quail — do not hang; roast or braise to cook.

Wild duck — can be mallard or widgeon, hang for 1 to 2 days, roast or braise.

Venison — the lean flesh is a dark, blood-red colour. Hang for 2-3 weeks in a cold room. Roast or braise in joints; small cuts can be fried. Marinade before cooking to improve dryness and toughness.

Do not remove fur or feathers before hanging. When game is hung, microbes break down the tissue, improving the flavour and tenderising the flesh. Game which is damaged should not be hung for long. All game will deteriorate if hung too long: the warmer the weather the quicker it will become high.

All game birds and animals are important protein foods. Most are rich in potassium, phosphorus and sulphur, plus significant amounts of other minerals.

Duck is a rich source of protein and has no carbohydrate, but provides important minerals and other nutrients. The calorie content varies depending on the ratio of skin to meat. The skin of roast duck accounts for a lot of calories, 340 calories per 100 grams of roast duck with skin, only 190 calories if only the meat is eaten. The fat content of duck, with the skin removed is less than 5 per cent of raw weight.

Pigeon has a rather high fat content: 11 to 20 per cent, goose is also high at 21 to 30 per cent.

Pheasant, partridge and venison have a fat content of 5 to 10 per cent; grouse and rabbit, less than 5 per cent.

Storage points for meat and poultry

- Remove meat from plastic cover, handle as little as possible and store covered on a tray in the refrigerator or cold store. Never store above or near cooked meats.
- Fresh lamb or mutton will keep 3 to 5 days in a refrigerator, poultry for 3 days, pork for 2 to 4 days, offal for a maximum of 2 days.
- Always keep cured bacon and meat separate from uncured bacon and meat, to prevent contamination of the curing salts.

When game is in season

Grouse — Aug 12 to Dec 10
Snipe — Aug 12 to Jan 31
Partridge — Sept 1 to Feb 1
Wild duck — Sept 1 to Jan 31
Pheasant — Oct 1 to Feb 1
Woodcock — Oct 31 to Feb 1
Venison, hares, rabbits and pigeons are available throughout the year.
Common quail are a protected species at all times.

17 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

fish

The three types of fish are white, oily and shellfish.

White can be round fish, such as: Bass, Catfish, Cod, Conger Eel, Coley, Red Gurnard, Haddock, Hake, Huss, John Dory, Ling, Monkfish, Red Mullet, Grey Mullet, Pollack, Redfish, Black Sea Bream, Red Sea Bream, Shark and Whiting

▬ or flat white fish, such as: Brill, Dab, Flounder, Halibut, Megrim, Plaice, Skate, Lemon Sole, Dover Sole, Turbot, or Witch.

Oily are all round in shape, such as: Anchovy, Herring, Mackerel, Pilchard/Sardine, Salmon, Sprat, Tuna.

Shellfish are divided into those with jointed legs and a tough outer layer covering the body, such as: Brown Crab, Spider Crab, Crawfish, Lobsters, Prawns, Shrimps

▬ or those with soft bodies and a shell they retreat into, such as: Cockle, Clam, Mussel, Native Oyster, Pacific Oyster, Scallop, Whelk, Winkle

▬ or those which are not readily identified as shellfish, are soft bodied but nevertheless are classed as shellfish by the Sea Fish Industry Authority, such as Octopus and Squid.

QUALITY POINTS FOR PURCHASING

In general, avoid fish with: a dull or slimy skin, sunken, cloudy eyes; a sour and unpleasant smell — however, skate sometimes smells slightly of ammonia until cooked.

White or oily fish

▬ bright skin with a good sheen

▬ scales firmly attached

▬ eyes bright, clear and full

▬ gills, if present, are bright red underneath, when lifted

▬ flesh is firm and resilient, with any pressure dent flattening out quickly

Smoked fish

▬ no discolouration

▬ a fresh glossy appearance

▬ bright and clean surface, with no smuts caused by the smoking process

▬ a pleasant, smokey smell.

The fat content of oily fish is mainly polyunsaturated, that is of the type that helps prevent heart disease. White fish contains between 1 — 2% fat (fish can vary between 0.5% — 2

All fish are a good source of thiamin, riboflavin niacin, B6, B12, pantothenic acid and biotin.

Oily fish is particularly rich in the fat-soluble vitamins A and D.

A yeast batter for frying fish gives good results and retains its crispness.

Whole Hen lobsters are used to colour certain soups, sauces and other dishes.

Squid has an ink sack. This should be removed before cooking and discarded unless it is to be used for colouring.

The colour in any flesh is due to a protein in the muscles called myoglobin which stores oxygen. Land animals use their muscles more than fish, therefore their flesh has more colour than fish flesh.

Live shellfish

- a heavy and full sound when tapped lightly
- no claws missing on crabs and lobsters
- lobster tails spring back into place after being uncurled. Lobster claws should be bound with elastic bands on delivery to prevent injury through fighting
- lobsters are fairly heavy in proportion to size
- hen crabs and lobsters have broader tails than cock lobsters and more flesh, but not necessarily as good quality
- crab claws are large and fairly heavy
- live oysters must have firmly closed shells
- scallops should be purchased ready cleaned or with the shells closed tightly before cleaning and the orange parts bright and moist.

The Sea Fish Industry Authority has a Quality Award System to raise standards in the industry. You will be able to select a fish supplier who has gained this award and the right to display it (see unit 6). The Authority will help you with writing your fish purchasing specifications and check that you are receiving the quality you specified. The SFIA can arrange seminars for your staff on the preparation and cooking of fish.

Sea Fish Industry Authority, Sea Fisheries House, 10 Young Street, Edinburgh EH2 4JQ, tel: 031-225 2515 or 071-823 6977.

Cooked shellfish

- shells are intact — if cracked the meat texture may have been damaged by water seepage during cooking
- soft crab or lobster shells which feel light could indicate a new grown shell, which would lessen the flavour
- shrimps and prawns are even-sized and not too small
- liquid in cooked crab and lobsters, caused by the shrinking of the flesh from the shell, indicates overcooking.

The Shellfish Association of Great Britain will give advice on purchasing, cooking and service of shellfish: Fishmongers Hall, London Bridge, London EC4R 9EL, tel: 071-283 8805.

Delivery and storage

Where possible order daily, direct from the supplier or market.

Fresh fish should be well iced on delivery. If necessary to store before use, keep in a separate refrigerator, in a covered container with ice.

Smoked fish should be stored above fresh fish in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Frozen fish should be stored at -18°C or below:

White fish — not more than 3 months
Oily fish — not more than 2 months
Shellfish — not more than 2 months
Smoked fish — not more than 3 months

Fish lends itself easily to be either cooked, defrosted or reheated by a microwave oven.

- Dishes can be cooked in only a matter of minutes, but it is essential to follow the microwave manufacturer's instructions for cooking and standing times required.
- Only cook in a non-metallic container, or a cook-bag. To keep the fish moist, cover the container with a lid, plate or greaseproof paper.
- If cooking whole fish, lightly score the skin at the thickest parts to allow the steam to escape. Do not add too much liquid, such as a sauce, as this will prolong the cooking time and toughen the flesh.
- Fish can be shallow fried in a microwave oven using a browning dish.
- All food continues to cook for a few moments when removed from the oven. The recommended standing time will be specified for your particular microwave oven.
- For defrosting frozen fish, follow the instructions for your oven.

18 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

fruit

Fruit should be purchased mature, but not over-ripe, and of the right colour for its variety. There should be no signs of bruising, decay or insect damage. Any fruit which is split, or has mould growing on it, should be rejected.

Berries or soft fruits

These include: blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, black and red currants, gooseberries, loganberries, raspberries, strawberries and cape gooseberries.

Soft fruits deteriorate quickly, so purchase fruit which is not too ripe, store the boxes in a cool place, and use quickly. There should no shrinkage or signs of wilting; strawberries purchased under-ripe should be covered to ripen during storage.

Hard fruit

Apples are usually sold by size, in 5 mm range bands. Small dessert apples are the sweetest. Store in a cool place in their original boxes, in layers or on trays, so the apples are kept apart from each other.

The top four apples in terms of consumer demand are: Cox's Orange Pippin, available October to January, crisp, juicy and semi-sweet; Bramley's Seedlings, excellent for cooking; Granny Smith, mostly imported from South Africa, green skinned, crisp and juicy; and Golden Delicious, mostly imported from France, colour from green to yellow when ripe.

Pears ripen quickly, so purchase frequently and under-ripe. Store singly in trays in a cool place until ripe.

Stone fruits

These include: cherries, damsons, plums, apricots, greengages, peaches, mangoes, dates and nectarines.

Choose fruit which is not too ripe, purchase frequently, and store flat in a cool place and use quickly. Dessert plums can be purchased slightly immature, then kept in a warm place to ripen. Cherries will keep up to 14 days, covered in a refrigerator.

Citrus fruits

These include oranges, blood oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, pink grapefruit, mandarins, clementines (a cross between tangerine and orange), tangerines and satsumas. Store in a cool room. Generally large puffy citrus fruit lacks flavour.

Tropical and other fruits

These include bananas, pineapples, dates, figs, grapes, melons, rhubarb, cranberries, avocado pears, kiwi fruit, star fruit, lychees, paw paws and water melons. Bananas should not be refrigerated. The skins turn black at temperatures below 10°C. Ask for hands of bananas of a uniform size.

There are four E.C. quality standards for fruit and vegetables:

Extra superior quality, free from all defects.

Class I: good quality, free from major defects.

Class II: reasonably good quality, maybe more irregular in shape.

Class III: low marketable quality, must be free from open cracks.

Plums cooked in sugar syrup keep frozen for up to 12 months.

To remove the stone from a halved avocado, stab the stone with the sharp point of a knife and lift out.

Remember rhubarb leaves are poisonous!

Fruit seasons

Berries/soft fruits

Blackberry, wild varieties: July to October
Blueberry (whortlesbury or bilberry or the French myrtilles): July to August
Cranberry (imported from USA): September to March
Currant (black/red/white): July to August
Gooseberry: June to July
Loganberry (often sold unripe, becomes sweet when dark purple): June to August
Mulberry (rare in the UK): August to September
Raspberry: late June to September, earlier as an import
Strawberry: home grown varieties June to September; imported: all year
Sunberry: July to August
Tayberry: July to mid-August
Tummelberry: July to August

Eating apples

Charles Ross, Jonagold: late summer to autumn
Cox's Orange Pippin: October to February
Crispin, Laxton's Superb: late summer to February
Discovery, George Cave, Miller's Seedling: late summer
Egremont Russet, Kidd's Orange Red, Laxton's Fortune, Lord Lambourne: late summer to Christmas
Golden Delicious: home grown: November
Idared: March to June
Spartan: late summer to January
Tydeman's Late Orange: December
Vistabella: late July to August
Worcester Pearmain: September to Christmas

Cooking apples

Bramley Seedling: all year
Grenadier: August to September
Howgate Wonder: September to February
Lord Derby: September to Christmas

Pears

when held under cold storage conditions:
Bartlett (William): August to April
Beurre Hardy: August to April
Comice: late September to May
Conference: late September to May

Stone fruits

Apricot: May to September
Cherry: home grown June to September, imported: May to autumn
Damson: August to September
Nectarine and Brugnon: June to September
Peach: June to September
Plums and gages: August to September, imported: October to February

Blackberries date back to AD 1000. It is said to be unlucky to eat them after September 29, Michaelmas Day, when the devil is alleged to trample on them! Cardinal Wolsey made strawberries and cream fashionable by serving them at a feast in 1509. Raspberries were introduced into Britain in the 17th century. Cherries were discovered by the Romans in Asia Minor in about 70 BC. They were brought to Britain in the first century AD.

The apple is said to be the first fruit cultivated by humans, 10,000 to 20,000 years ago. In the UK, the average consumption per person per year is now estimated at 10.4 kg (22 lb 15 oz). Munching apples exercises the jaws and hardens gums! Pears have been cultivated for 3000 years.

Exotic fruits

King orange or naartje: a very sweet South African variety of tangerine

Kumquat: plum sized and orange coloured, bitter-sweet flavour, edible kind, available December to March

Mineolas: easy peeling, very juicy, cross between tangerines and grapefruits, size of a Navel orange, available January to February

Navel orange: sweet, small, available November to January

Ortanique: cross between sweet orange and satsuma

Seville orange: thick skinned, bitter used for making marmalade, available January to March

Shaddock or pomelo: pear shaped, twice the size of grapefruit, thick rind, available December to April

Tangelo: cross between pomelo and tangerine, similar to mineolas.

Ugli: large rough-rinded hybrid, similar to shaddock

Breadfruit: a rough green skin, up to 6 inches in diameter, the yellow flesh becomes sweet when fully ripe, cooked breadfruit tastes somewhat like bread

Cherimoya: size varies from ounces to pounds, oval, spherical, conical or heart shaped, flavour between a banana and a pineapple

Guava: similar in size to kiwi fruit, though rounder, faintly musky smell, pulpy, pink flesh with seeds like a tomato

19 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

vegetables

Root vegetables, tubers and bulbs

Root vegetables should be firm, sound, free from soil, and free from spade marks. Avoid any that are wizened or dried out. Empty out of sacks or bags and store in bins or racks, in a cool, dark, dry and airy place. Top quality parsnips should have no 'fangs' or blemishes, nor brown patches. Unwashed carrots keep better. Uncooked beetroots should have no fibres, blemishes or broken skins. Over-large swedes are often woody and have side shoots.

Buy potatoes with a good shape. Avoid greening or scuffed skins, excess dirt, deep eyes and new shoots. Store in a dry, well-ventilated, cool place, bags on slats above the ground. Keep out of strong light (which turns potatoes green).

Jerusalem artichokes tend to be ugly and to lump. Avoid small, slug-eaten, bruised and broken tubers. Store in a cool, dark place, for not longer than a week.

Bulb vegetables such as onions should be firm and dry, with light, feathery skins. Avoid any with signs of sprouting, softness and flabbiness. Store in a cool dry place, watch for signs of deterioration, and use as quickly as possible.

When purchasing leeks watch for excess trimming of the small, slightly bulbous part immediately above the root — this leads to quick deterioration. Also avoid ones with yellow discoloured leaves. Store leeks in a cool, dark, airy place, or in a refrigerator, in a closed container.

Garlic should be healthy and fresh looking. Purchase in small quantities frequently and store in a dry, airy place.

Leaf vegetables

Cabbage varieties include: spring greens, spring, summer, autumn and winter cabbage, savoy, January king, celtic, red and white cabbage. Look for soundness and freshness. To store, remove excess leaves and keep in a cool, airy place.

Lettuce varieties have increased. Apart from the cos, round, and popular iceberg, there are now such names as oakleaf (or red oakleaf), lollo rosso, Bavarian, four seasons, and lollo biondo. Store in a cool place, preferably a refrigerator.

Brussels sprouts must be fresh looking, green with a white stalked base. Avoid any that are loose-leaved, yellow or slimey, dirty or damaged. Purchase on day required.

Chinese leaves should be crisp, fresh and of a bright colour. Washed and dried they can be stored for up to a week in a container in the refrigerator.

Spinach should be clean, free from dead, yellow or damaged leaves, hard stalks and flowering shoots. Purchase on day required and store in a cool place.

Flower vegetables

Cauliflowers should be fresh, white and firm. Store wrapped in a cool place and use on day of purchase for best results.

Broccoli or purple sprouting, needs to be a good colour, with no yellow leaves or flowers, and the shoots should snap easily. Avoid woody stalks on large heads.

Globe artichokes — purple and green varieties — should look fresh, the leaves feel stiff and have a slight bloom to them, the stalk about 10 cm (4 inches) in length.

Root vegetables include: carrots, parsnips, beetroots, swedes, turnips and radishes. Potatoes and Jerusalem artichokes are tubers. Onions, shallots, leeks and garlic are bulbs.

Potato varieties and uses

Alcmaria — good cooking quality

Arran Comet — early variety, best at start of season

Cara — all purpose, good for baking

Desiree — good all-rounder

Epicure — mainly available in Scotland, excellent flavour

Estima — early variety, bakes well at start of season

Home Guard — usually first British new potato

Jersey Royals — imported excellent potato, expensive early

King Edward — excellent for most cooking, floury

Marfona — large tubers later in season, good cooking quality

Maris Bard — an early all-rounder

Maris Piper — popular all-rounder, very good for chips

Pentland Crown — reliable all-rounder

Pentland Dell — used for chips

Pentland Hawk — popular in Scotland, a good keeping variety

Pentland Javelin — widely grown early, very white skin and flesh

Pentland Squire — first of the main crop, excellent for baking

Romano — similar to the red-skinned Desiree, but can disintegrate and discolour during cooking

Wilja — a second early, can be stored and sold later in the season, excellent for chipping

Fruit vegetables

Tomatoes can be purchased only partially red, and kept until ripe. Just-ripe tomatoes should be stored in a cool place.

Marrows, courgettes and cucumbers should be purchased when firm and a good green colour. Courgettes are best 10 to 15 cm (4 to 6 inches) long.

Marrows are best early in the season; avoid very large, yellowing samples. Cucumbers should be a good size and even shape, no external moisture or unpleasant smell. Store in a container in the refrigerator.

Seed vegetables

Shelling peas should have bright green pods. Mange tout should be very fresh and crisp. The sugar snap variety (eaten in the pod like mange tout, but containing fully formed peas) should be a good colour and disintegrate under gentle pressure.

Stem vegetables

Asparagus is sold in bundles. The grade — jumbo, extra, select and choice — indicates the spear size. Small, thin asparagus is named 'sprue'. Store in a cool, humid place and use within a day or so.

Sea-kale must be very fresh. If it is stale, limp or discoloured, it looses its nutty-flavour. Store in a cold, dark airy place.

Celery must look fresh and clean, stalks a greenish-white or green depending on the variety. Remove any excess leaves before storing, covered, in a refrigerator.

Celeriac, which looks like a rough, browning turnip, can be as small as a peach, or as big as coconut. Avoid those with damaged roots. Store in a cool, airy place until required.

Chicory of the Witloof variety should be conical in shape, crisp, tightly packed white leaves tipped with yellow/green. Radicchio is rounder in shape. It should be compact, with a dense heart and vivid red colour or have green leaves speckled with red depending on the variety. Store chicory in a closed container in a refrigerator for up to a week.

Fungi

This group includes truffles, mushrooms, cèpes and morels. Learn to identify each fungi and its intended use. Avoid fungi which has signs of infestation or spoilage, and shrinking. Store, unwashed in a closed container in the bottom of a refrigerator, for not more than a day or so.

The name Jerusalem artichoke derives from the Italian 'girasole'. Another theory is that it is a corruption of 'Ter Heuson', imported to Britain from the Netherlands, and pronounced 'Jerusalem' by the street hawkers who sold it.

Broccoli is also known as calabrese, taking this name from the Calabria region of Italy. Brussels has an 's' at the end, they are the sprouts of Brussels, the city!

The Egyptian Pharaohs believed that mushrooms held magical powers. The Chinese thought that they had health-giving properties and the Roman Emperor Claudius, who conquered southern Britain in the 1st Century AD, chose them as his favourite food.

No wonder Popeye ate spinach: it is rich in vitamins A and C, iron, calcium, protein, potassium and folic acid, as well as other nutrients and dietary fibre.

Raw carrots contain 23 calories per 100 g, boiled carrots 19 calories per 100 g.

Frost increases the sugar content of potatoes, and potatoes affected in this way do not deep fry well. Diabetic test sticks, such as chemists sell, are used in the fish and chip trade to test sugar content.

Salad onions should be trimmed, washed and placed in a container in a refrigerator.

Shallots, more delicate than onions, are good for salads and sauces.

20 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

dairy produce and eggs

BUTTER

Butter must contain at least 80 per cent milk fat, except where the salt content exceeds 3 per cent and the unit is labelled salted; not more than 2 per cent milk solids, other than fat; and not more than 16 per cent water. The Butter Regulations 1966 and Butter Regulations Amendment 1973 allow lactic cultures, natural colouring materials and synthetic beta-carotene.

There are various commercial spreads which contain butterfat in the form of butter or cream and selected vegetable oils. Some use skimmed milk and buttermilk. Ghee — butter clarified by boiling — is used for ethnic cooking.

Butter purchasing points:

- taste is creamy and pleasant, not rancid
- texture is soft and creamy
- smell is fresh, not rancid
- colour is almost white or pale yellow
- product is salted or unsalted as required.

Store butter in the refrigerator wrapped, or in a suitable container. Avoid exposing butter to light and air, as oxidation will take place, causing it to become rancid. Keep away from strong-smelling foods, as it absorbs flavour. Frozen before its use-by date and well wrapped, butter will keep for up to three months.

CHEESE

Cheese is produced in four main types: hard, semi-hard, soft or cream and blue vein.

- Skin or rind should not have spots of mildew. Freshly-cut cheese should not have dry areas or beads of fat on its surface. Cut, pre-wrapped cheese should have no evidence of mould, moisture or greasiness inside the packing. When cut, the cheese should have no strong foreign smells or indication of ammonia. Soft cheeses should have a delicate, creamy consistency, not runny.

A general rule for keeping cheese is that the harder the cheese, the less moisture it contains, the longer its storage life.

- Unopened, vacuum packed cheeses will keep for several weeks in the refrigerator. Cut cheeses must be well wrapped to prevent smell contamination. Use grease proof paper, not cling wrap.

- Soft cheeses which are ripened by the action of moulds or other microorganisms should be kept refrigerated at 8°C or below (5°C or below from 1 April 1993).

When cream is added to a sauce or soup, reheat but do not boil. Sterilised milk makes creamier milk puddings and sauces.

Sour cream/milk can be made by adding 1 tablespoon lemon juice to 142 ml (1/4 pint) fresh single cream/warm milk. Double cream whips better when a tablespoon of milk is added per 150 ml (5 fl oz).

Thaw frozen cream in a refrigerator. Cream which has a minimum butterfat content of 35 per cent can be kept frozen for up to 1 month. It must be well-wrapped. Double cream, mixed with 1 tablespoon milk per 142 ml, partially whipped and frozen, keeps up to 2 months. Cakes and desserts decorated or filled with cream will keep frozen for up to 1 month. Small cream rosettes, packed in rigid containers, freeze well; thaw for 45 minutes before using.

Remove cheeses from refrigeration 1 to 2 hours before serving, but keep in a cool, dark place. Mature hard cheeses, well-wrapped, freeze well.

Bulk homogenised milk, whole or semi-skimmed, is available in 3 or 5 gallon containers called pergals. On delivery, wipe clean but do not remove the outer plastic covering on the pergal, then place immediately in the bulk-milk chiller-dispenser, or keep refrigerated as other dairy products. Equipment to hold pergals can be rented or purchased — your local dairy will advise.

CREAM AND MILK

Sterilised products — homogenised and heat-treated, which causes a caramelisation of the lactose — will keep for 2 to 3 months without refrigeration. UHT (ultra-heat) treated products will keep for several months and canned products for about 2 years. Never store beyond the use-by date. Once opened, refrigerate and use within a few days.

Fresh cream and milk should be stored covered in a refrigerator, well away from strong smells, for not more than 2 or 3 days, or after the use-by date. Products exposed for use should be disposed of afterwards.

Cream comes in various forms: *half*, suitable for pouring; *single* (sold with red top), for adding to soups, sauces and casseroles, and for pouring; *sterilised*, for pouring or spooning; *whipping* (green top); *spooning; whipped* (may contain sugar and stabilisers); *double* (blue top), for decorating, piping, liqueur coffees; *extra thick double*, heavily homogenised, will spoon but not whip; *clotted* and *soured* (purple top).

Whole milk is pasteurised (bottles have silver top) or homogenised, so the cream does not separate (red top). Channel Islands milk (gold top) can also be bought unpasteurised (green top with gold stripe).

Milk powders have been spray-dried. Most are of skimmed milk origin, some have added vegetable fat, and some are fortified with vitamins A and D. Store in a cool, dry place, when it will keep for several months.

Condensed and evaporated milks have undergone treatment to remove some of the original water content. Evaporated milk has twice the concentration of ordinary milk and no sugar.

Purchasing checks:

- date stamp has not expired
- cartons not battered, or damaged, or blown.

EGGS

Hens eggs are graded according to weight: size 1, the largest is 70 g and over; size 7, the smallest, is under 45 g; sizes 2 to 6 are in bands of 5 g.

Classification is done by shining a strong light through the egg to show any cracks in the shell, the position of the yolk and any blood or meat spots in the white. Grade A is the best. Grade C eggs are not for human consumption.

Boxes in which the eggs are packed must also show the date and country of packing, which can be in the form of a code (UK is 9). The description of the eggs, for instance 'Free-range' is closely regulated.

Store eggs away from strong smells in a cool room, or preferably in a refrigerator or cold room at about 7°C. When they are removed from the refrigerator, they need to be brought to room temperature (which takes about an hour) for best cooking results. Keep the eggs in their boxes or trays, blunt end upwards. Do not wash before storage.

Cheese is thought to be one of the oldest forms of preserved foods. It dates back at least 6000 years. Butter is mentioned in the Bible, in Genesis: 'Abraham took butter and milk'; and in Proverbs: 'Surely the churning of milk bringeth butter'.

Contemporary art of 2500 BC shows cows being milked. The milking machine was invented in America in 1849. Milk was first bottled in 1884.

British sales of yogurt began in 1939 and fruit yogurt in 1962. Low fat yogurts must have no more than 2 per cent fat; very low fat yogurts no more than 0.5 per cent fat. Greek yogurt contains 12 per cent fat.

Minimum fat content	%
Cream	
Half	12
Soured/Single	18
Sterilised	35
Spooning/Whipped	35
Double/Extra thick	48
Clotted	55
Milk	
Skimmed	0.3
Semi-skimmed	1.5 — 1.8
Whole	3.0
Channel Islands	4.8

21 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

bakery goods

BREAD

According to research conducted by the Flour Advisory Bureau, people are eating no more bread than they did ten years ago, but they are now trying new bread products. The bakery industry has responded to this demand. In 1990 alone, the large plant bakeries introduced more than 160 new products; so caterers have an increasingly wide choice with which to tempt their customers.

Your bread supply may come from one of the large plant bakeries direct, a small local bakery, which bakes on the premises, possibly specialising in continental bakery goods, or from a local supermarket, with an in-store bakery. The choice includes:

- white, brown and wholemeal, black rye, malt, sour dough, soda, and softgrain
- traditional loaf shapes such as: sliced, split tin, tin, bloomer, cob, pan cob, farmhouse, barrel, Danish, Coburg, Vienna, sandwich, cottage, plait
- rolls in all shapes, sizes and recipes; crumpets, muffins, fruit loaf, buns, Chelsea buns, pykelets
- continental breads and products such as: French baguettes, ficilles, bâtards, pains de campagne, pains au chocolate, croissants, brioches and petit pains; Dutch farm bread; Greek daktyla and pitta breads (also available in wholemeal); Eastern European cholla and bagels; American soft grain hoagies; Arabic bread and Westphalian wheat and rye farmbread.

Purchasing and storage points

Bread should:

- look and smell fresh
- be resilient when lightly pressed
- have hard crusts that are crisp but not tough
- have the correct texture, colour and shape for the particular type of loaf.

Bread should be stored in a cool, well ventilated room. Unwrapped bread should be covered with a clean tea towel or kitchen paper.

Bread which is still hot on delivery, should be placed on a rack for the air to circulate and away from any cooked bread, otherwise condensation will occur at the points of contact.

Avoid over-ordering bread. Keep leftovers in a container in a cool place until they can be made into breadcrumbs, bread and butter pudding or bread pudding, for example. This should be done within a few days to reduce the risk of contamination.

Carbohydrates are an important source of fuel for the body. Sugar provides a simple carbohydrate which is absorbed quickly, but gives only short-lived boosts of energy. Bread, with its starch and fibre content, provides a complex carbohydrate, which breaks down and converts into glucose relatively slowly during the digestive process and provides a more sustained energy.

Every kind of flour is nutritious as it contains carbohydrate, protein, B vitamins and minerals.

By law, iron and the B vitamins thiamin and niacin are restored to the level found in 80 per cent extraction flour.

Calcium is added to all flour other than self-raising and wholemeal. White flour contains four times as much calcium as wholemeal flour.

All flours contain fibre. White contains 2.7 per cent, the same as raw cabbage, brown 5.1 per cent and wholemeal 8.5 per cent, more than stewed prunes or baked beans.

The cottage shape originated during the Roman occupation of Britain. The bloomer loaf is so called because the bread blooms out of the cuts in the top. The cross on a Coburg is from Medieval times.

The number of in-store bakeries increased from 621 in 1984 to 897 in 1987, according to the Flour Advisory Bureau report 1990.

According to a Gallup Poll survey half of all Britain's young adults (16 to 24) buy sandwiches at least once a week.

A Scottish bakery is exporting to a new sandwich factory on the outskirts of Paris, the bread it uses to make 15,000 sandwiches a day, for sale in the capital's supermarkets.

FLOUR

Plain or all-purpose flour (usually white) can be used for shortcrust pastry, for thickening sauces and in other dishes which do not require a raising agent.

Self-raising flour (white, brown or wholemeal) has had a raising agent added, so it provides the exact amount of raising power, evenly mixed throughout the flour.

Soft flour (usually white and light) has a low protein content. This gives small volume and a melt-in-the-mouth texture to biscuits, cakes and shortcrust pastry made from it.

Strong flour (usually white) has a high protein content. This gives large volume and open texture, important for bread, yeast cookery, puff and flaky pastry.

Malted wheat is a brown flour with added grains of malted wheat. This gives a distinctive texture and nutty flavour.

Storing flour

- Store in cool, dry conditions, off the floor.
- Store in a clean container with a tight fitting lid, large containers may have wheels.
- Avoid adding new flour to old.
- Plain flour keeps for 4 to 6 months and self-raising for 2 to 3 months.
- Wholemeal and brown flours, because of their higher fat content, may go rancid if kept more than 2 months. Store away from other flours.

In wholegrain or brown rice, the bran layer is intact, only the husk has been removed.

Wholemeal or wholewheat flour contain the whole of the wheatgrain, nothing is added or taken away.

Brown flour usually contains about 85 per cent of the wheat grain.

White flour usually contains about 75 per cent of the wheat grain, most of the bran and wheatgerm are removed when the flour is milled.

BAKING AIDS AND PASTRY GOODS

The wide range includes: angelica, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, coconut, cream of tartare, dried whole egg, gelatine powder or leaves, golden raising powder, jelly powders, piping jelly, jelly diamonds or shapes, lemon juice or crystallised slices for decorating, ready to use pastries in various shapes with a long shelf life, meringue fingers, nests or shells, pavlova shapes or meringue mixes, orange crystallised slices, shredded suet and dried or fresh yeast.

Blancmanges, custard and cornflour; mousses, cheesecake bases, fillings and toppings, crème caramel mixes, desserts such as Mississippi Mud Pie or Zabaglione, lemon and pineapple meringue pie fillings, toppings for desserts, custard mixes and powders, or ready to serve packs.

Biscuits, cakes, cake and pudding mixes: assorted selections of sweet and savoury biscuits, breadsticks, crispbreads, french toasts and wafers. Fruit cake slices for convenience snacks; ready made flan cases, sponges, finger and trifle sponges; mixes include batters, breads, buns, burger baps, crumbles, doughnuts, pancakes, shortcrust puff and wholemeal pastry, pizza bases, scones, sponges, suet pudding and yorkshire batter.

The Flour Advisory Bureau booklet 'Simply sandwiches' gives many useful tips. The Bureau's helpline for queries on flour and bread is 071-493 6786.

Why not offer your customers something different with their morning coffee, such as a bacon muffin, a pykelet, or a crumpet with an anchovy relish?

Refrigerated sandwich display cabinets must be at a temperature of 8°C or below (5°C from April 1993) according to the Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990, but this regulation does not apply to sandwiches sold within 4 hours of preparation.

22 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

dry goods

1. Breakfast cereals

Available in bulk or proprietary brand packets: bran, bran flakes, cornflakes, muesli, oat crunchies, puffed wheat, porridge oats, which can be of the quick cooking variety, rolled oats, wheat flakes and whole wheat cereal.

Variety packs of breakfast cereals provide a good way of catering for individual customer's favourites in small hotels and guesthouses, and justify the extra cost.

2. Cereals and pulses

Such as black eyed, butter, haricot and kidney beans and pearl barley; chick, green and yellow split and marrowfat peas; rice: easy cook, ground, long grain, parboiled, short grain, natural wholegrain and wild.

Many cereal manufacturers have added extra vitamins but must not make exaggerated claims.

3. Curry products

The standard varieties are available in a variety of strengths, from mild to extra hot, as a paste, powder or sauce; also garam masala, korma, and tandoori.

Accompaniments include Bombay duck, naan bread mix, onion bhajia mix and poppadoms.

4. Dehydrated products

Fruit and vegetables such as apple pieces, sliced green beans, garden peas, mixed vegetables, onions, potato powders and pearls.

Meat products such as beef or chicken curry, chicken pie filling, chicken supreme, minced beef or mutton, savoury mince and farmhouse casserole.

Dehydrated soups cover a large range of standard varieties such as asparagus, beef and tomato, vegetable, celery, chicken, chicken and leek, chicken noodle, French onion, golden vegetables, green pea, leek, lentil, minestrone, mulligatawny, mushroom, oxtail, pea and ham, scotch broth, clear vegetable, thick vegetable, vegetable and beef and tomato; also the more unusual, generally more expensive, such as consomme, cordon bleu vegetables, game, and lobster bisque.

5. Dried fruits

Apricots, currants, dates, fruit salad, whole and broken glace cherries, mixed fruit, mixed peel, soak or no soak prunes, seedless raisins and sultanas.

6. Essences and colourings

Essences such as almond, anchovy, brandy, bunspice, chocolate, lemon, orange, peppermint, raspberry, rennet, rum, sherry, strawberry and vanilla. Colourings such as blue, chocolate brown, artificial cochineal, green, yellow and bright red.

7. Gravy, stocks and bouillon

Aspic jelly; gravy browning, granules, mixes, and instant; bouillon varieties include, beef, chicken, fish, ham, mutton, and vegetable; stocks include beef, chicken and vegetable cubes and concentrates.

8. Meat and vegetable extracts

Available as ready-made meat and vegetable glazes for enriching stocks, sauces, casseroles and stews.

9. Milk powders and non-dairy whiteners

Milk powder (spray-dried skimmed milk, see unit 20) can be used in tea, coffee, sauces and in most recipes requiring milk. By reducing the amount of water, a richer, more concentrated product can be made. Non-dairy fat milk powder

and non-dairy whiteners for replacing milk or cream in coffee and tea provide an alternative for those who cannot, or prefer not to eat animal fats. The butter fat is replaced with vegetable oil.

10. Mustards

Coarse, powder or ready-made, Dijon, English or French.

11. Nuts

Blanched, broken, flaked, ground, nibbed, split or whole; almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts salted, roasted and dry roasted, and walnuts.

12. Pickles

Pickled vegetables, such as sliced or whole beetroot, mixed vegetables, onion, red cabbage; olives black or green whole, stoned or stuffed; capers, gherkins, pink and green peppercorns. Piccalilli, mango chutney, tomato, chilli, corn, cucumber relishes and sweet pickles.

13. Preserves

Honey, clear or set, lemon curd, assorted fruit jams and marmalades. Single-portion jars can be cost effective by reducing wastage.

14. Salad dressings and salads

Mayonnaise, prawn cocktail sauce, seafood sauce, salad cream, French dressing and many other dressings such as cream and chive, garlic and herb, blue cheese, onion and chive, tomato and garlic. Potato salad, vegetable salad, coleslaw, brida, mushroom, new potatoes, Waldorf salad.

15. Sauces

Brown, tomato, cranberry, barbecue, horseradish, mint sauce and jelly, soy, tabasco, tartare, Worcester. Ready-made sauces include béchamel, cheese, gravy mushroom, onion, parsley, bolognaise, chasseur, chilli con carne, roux blanc, demi glace, hollandaise.

16. Spreads and pastes

Variations of meat and fish, also chocolate spread and peanut butter.

17. Stuffing and breadcrumbs

Sage and onion, parsley and thyme, chestnut, various fruit and herb or nut stuffings. Natural or golden breadcrumbs. Ready to use croûtons.

18. Sugar

Caster, demerara, granulated, icing, soft dark, light brown and speciality sugars: in bulk, packets, loose wrapped and fast dissolving cubes, crystals, or sachets. Sugar substitutes.

19. Syrups and treacle

Syrups for milk shakes include chocolate and various fruit flavour, golden syrup and black treacle.

20. Vinegars

Distilled, malt, herb, fruit, white and wine vinegars.

Parboiled wholegrain rice takes around 20 minutes to cook, ordinary wholegrain rice takes up to 50 minutes.

Dehydrated large onion pieces, made from pure white American onions take 20 minutes to reconstitute. White in colour, with a fresh taste and crunchy texture they can be used on salads or pizzas.

23 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

seasonings

Allspice (also called pimento, Jamaican pepper) — the whole or powdered seed of a tropical American tree — has a flavour resembling a mixture of cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg giving a fragrant and pungent aroma.

Asafoetida, bitter and smells strongly of garlic.

Barbecue spice is a blend of paprika, coriander, salt, nutmeg, celery, onion, caraway, mustard, pepper, chilli, sage, marjoram and garlic.

Basil has a warm spicy taste. Use with rice, pizza and pasta dishes, salads, soups and stews. Excellent with all tomato dishes, lamb, liver, eggs, cheeses, lobster crayfish or crab. In poultry and fish sauces, use sparingly.

Bay leaves are the principal ingredient in a bouquet garni. They add a delicate flavour to casseroles, soups, stews and game: remove the leaf before serving, or use ground bay leaves.

Blackened cajun seasoning is a blend of herbs, spices and pepper, especially created for Cajun or Creole cookery, both commonly known as Louisiana cookery. Pieces of meat or fish are dipped into melted butter, then coated with Cajun seasoning and fried in a smoking hot frying pan for a few minutes on each side.

Bouquet garni, available loose or in sachets, is a carefully prepared blend of thyme, parsley and bay leaves to add flavour to soups, stews and casseroles.

Caraway seed has a sweet, warm, pungent taste and odour, halfway between that of aniseed and fennel.

Cardamom — available whole or ground, belongs to the ginger family. In Western Europe it is used in liqueurs and confectionery.

Cassia is an inferior type of cinnamon.

Cayenne, also known as tabasco, is decorative and very hot.

Chervil has a delicate elusive flavour and is used in fines herbes.

Chillies have an arid and piercing flavour particularly when used whole. Remove pods before serving. Crushed chillies release their flavour more quickly. Chilli powder is also very strong, and chilli con carne mixes are available.

Chinese Five Spice is a blend of staranise, cinnamon, fennel, ginger, white pepper and cloves.

Chives, another ingredient of fines herbes, have a more delicate flavour than onion.

Cinnamon, a highly flavoured and aromatic spice, is available ground or as sticks.

Clove is the dried, unexpanded bud of a tropical tree, rich in essential oils and with a sweet, strong, pungent aroma and flavour. Ground cloves are easily absorbed into a dish.

Coriander seed has a warm, fragrant odour, reminiscent of anise, orange and cumin and has a mild sweet, yet pungent taste.

Cumin seed has a strongly aromatic taste which is both hot and bitter.

Dill seeds, whole or ground, are used, particularly in France to flavour sauces and pastries. Soak dill seeds in vinegar for a few days to produce dill vinegar.

Herbs have been used for thousands of years for medicinal and cooking purposes.

Most herbs are available at any time of the year in their dried form and, in an increasingly wide range, freeze dried. Freeze dried herbs look and taste like the fresh product. They reconstitute very quickly on contact with wet food.

Herbs can replace salt in cooking by adding flavour to dishes. Those of your customers who have given up salt for health reasons will appreciate the difference.

Dried herbs and spices should be stored in air-tight containers, away from the light, to retain their flavour, colour and freshness.

A peppercorn rent was worth 3 weeks pay.

Dill weed has a warm and slightly piquant flavour and an aroma similar to aniseed and caraway.

Fennel seed, which looks like miniature watermelons, exudes a warm, sweet and pleasant smell, not unlike aniseed. For flavouring a casserole, tie the seeds in a bag.

Fenugreek seed is slightly bitter and aromatic.

Fines herbes are a combination of parsley, chervil, chives and tarragon, favoured in many French dishes.

Garlic in its freeze-dried form reconstitutes almost immediately on contact with liquid and produces all the flavour of fresh garlic. Also available in chips, powder or puree.

Ground ginger has a hot, clean taste and a sweet yet spicy aroma.

Herbes de Provence are an aromatic blend of savoury, marjoram, origanum, thyme, rosemary, basil and tarragon.

Herbs for burning are a special blend of herbs which add flavour and aroma to barbecued food.

Horseradish: thick, white pungent root, ground or flaked.

Italian seasoning is a blend of basil, origanum, rosemary, thyme, pepper and garlic.

Juniper berries are used to add flavour to marinades and certain dishes, such as sauerkraut.

Marjoram has a sweet, pleasant and delicate flavour.

Mint, one of the most popular herbs is used in sweets, sauces, salads, jellies, vinegars and teas.

Mixed herbs are a blend of thyme, parsley and marjoram.

Mixed spice is used in pastries, puddings, cakes and biscuits, sweet pickle, chutney, mincemeat and hot cross buns.

Mustard seed has a pungent flavour.

Nutmeg has a delicate fragrance and sweet, warm, highly spiced flavour.

Origanum, the distinctive herb favoured in Greek cookery is highly aromatic and pungent, so must be used carefully.

Paprika is the dried, ripe fruit of sweet red peppers, mild and aromatic, it gives a bright red hue to the food. There is also a hot variety.

Parsley, one of the most widely used herbs, can be added to boiled ham, bacon or chicken and as a garnish on vegetables and egg dishes.

Peppers. *Black* pepper has a hot, highly pungent, biting flavour and sharp aroma. Use whole or freshly ground. *Green* peppercorns are picked from the plant at an immature stage. Available in brine, freeze dried, whole or crushed, and as a purée. *White* pepper is less pungent in flavour than black peppercorns. It is the same berry with the dark outer coating removed. Use, whole, crushed or ground. *Mixed black and white* peppercorns give more flavour than white but without the fierceness of the black.

Poppy seeds give a nutty flavour and enhance the appearance of food.

Rosemary imparts a delicious aromatic fragrance to food.

Saffron is the dried stamens of saffron or cultivated crocus, deep yellow in colour with an aromatic smell and bitter sweet taste. Very costly. Available in strands or ready ground.

Sage, pungent and rather bitter, goes particularly well with fatty meats.

Salts are available in various forms such as cooking, granular, sea salt, table, also flavoured: celery, garlic, onion.

Sesame seeds are pearl white in colour, the hulled seeds are sweet and nutty particularly when toasted and used in sesame sauce.

Star Anise has a distinctive liquorice-like, aniseed flavour.

Tarragon is an essential ingredient in fines herbes, sauce bearnaise and sauce verte.

Thyme has a pleasant, pungent smell.

24 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

oils and fats

Oils and fats can be divided into two groups according to their appearance at room temperature:

- Solid: palm oil, lard, dripping, proprietary brands. Refined solid fats are generally stable if they are stored correctly. Unrefined dripping is quite sensitive to heat, so is generally used at lower than normal frying temperatures. Solid frying fats should be melted at a temperature not exceeding 132°C (270°F), before heating to frying temperature, otherwise they tend to burn.

- Liquid: groundnut oil, soyabean oil, rapeseed oil, corn oil, blends of liquid oil and proprietary brands. Liquid oils are easier to handle and use because they can be poured. The most stable liquid oils such as groundnut and corn oils, are generally the most expensive.

Proprietary brands of so-called fluid frying products are pourable, so do not need special melting, like solid fats. They are also generally more stable than normal vegetable oil blends, giving a longer frying life.

Table margarines are available in bulk, tubs or individual portions, and high in polyunsaturates.

Compound white fats, made from vegetable oils, are very suitable for pastry and bread making.

Pastry margarine has a relatively high melting point, so it is ideal for puff pastry. (For short pastry it tends to produce a tough product.)

High-ratio fats are specially made so that they take up a greater amount of liquid and sugar than ordinary fats. They cream easily and are used with high-ratio flours in recipes for very light, yet economical sponge cakes.

Lard was once highly valued for savoury pie crusts, because of its flavour and the flaky quality it produces. It is not suitable for cakes because it cannot hold much air.

Purchasing fats and oils

- Select the correct medium for the job: choose fats and oils which will complement the flavour of the food, and which suit the cooking process. Your supplier will give you advice.

- Invest in quality. High quality oils will produce an attractive finish to your food. There will be minimum absorption into the food — leaving tastier food and a longer lasting oil.

- Purchase in container or package sizes which are convenient to store in your establishment, suit the level of business, and can be safely handled by your staff.

- Any frying medium is as good as the way you treat it. This applies to a high cost product as well as to a cheaper one.

- Remember that many of your customers prefer to eat healthier foods. Keep yourself up-to-date on issues which might concern your customers, and on new products developed by suppliers to meet those concerns.

The National Advisory Committee on Nutritional Education (NACNE) report (1983) advised a reduction in salt, sugar and fat — particularly saturated fats — and an increase in fibre.

The Health Education Authority promotes healthier eating: your local branch will give you guidance. There are many books and pamphlets on healthy eating, and there is further advice in the HCTC/Macmillan Education *Foodcraft* books and the Foodcraft video *Catering for Health*.

Soft margarine is generally not suitable for pastry making, because it is too soft to be rubbed into flour. To overcome this problem blend the soft margarine with about a third of the flour, add the liquid, then gradually add the rest of the flour.

Olive oil grades vary according to acidity levels and the pressing process. The top quality is 'Extra Virgin', a delicate oil with a low acidity, from the first pressing. The best olive oil is said to come from Italy, southern Greece and north west Crete.

Fats and oils contain three different fatty acids in different proportions: saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated. A high intake of saturated fats commonly leads to a high level of cholesterol in the blood, which means in turn that you are at a potentially high risk from heart disease. A diet that is low in fats, and substitutes polyunsaturated fats for saturated fats tends to lower blood cholesterol levels. Animal fats, palm oil and coconut oil are high in saturates. Olive oil is high in monounsaturates, which do not have a harmful effect. Indeed, in Mediterranean countries where a lot of olive oil is consumed, the average life expectancy is longer than other countries such as the UK and USA. Products high in polyunsaturates include safflower, sunflower, corn, maize and soya oil, soft margarines and white baking fats which are labelled 'high in polyunsaturates', nuts and oily fish such as herring, mackerel and trout.

Looking after oils and fats

Oils and fats start to deteriorate as soon as they are exposed to air and will eventually turn rancid. This process (oxidisation) happens faster to polyunsaturated fats than to saturated ones. It also speeds up the moment the oil or fat is heated.

Many frying oils have substances added during their processing which act as antioxidants, and so extend the life of the product. Other good practices for looking after your oil are:

- store in covered containers, leaving as little room for air as possible
- store in cool, dry conditions, off the floor (unless in large metal or plastic containers), away from strong smelling substances
- use stainless steel cooking equipment (iron, untinned brass and copper pans help make fat break down)
- top up frequently with fresh oil or fat so that some of the antioxidants are replaced
- always keep oil free of loose particles of food; drain fryers regularly, clean out before refilling with the filtered oil
- do not overload the fryer; the correct ratio of oil to food is one part food to six parts oil
- prepare the food carefully. Wet foods — particularly potatoes — tend to make the oil froth and break down and this is unsafe and wasteful. Fragile foods must be handled carefully to avoid break-up during frying
- never allow the oil or fat to reach its smoke point
- season food after cooking: salt speeds up deterioration
- keep deep fat fryers properly maintained
- check the accuracy of thermostats regularly.

Mistake	Result / Main Reaction	Odours, Flavours	Smoke	Foaming	Colour Darkens	Oil Thickens
Frying too hot	Oxidation	●	●	●	●	●
	Isomerisation					●
	Polymerisation					●
	Pyrolysis		●			
	Hydrolysis	●	●	●		●
Melting out carelessly	Pyrolysis		●			
Wet food	Hydrolysis	●	●	●		●
Fragile food	Caramelisation				●	
Frying fatty foods	Oxidation	●	●	●	●	●
Not cleaning	Caramelisation				●	
Not rinsing	Hydrolysis	●	●	●		●
Iron or copper present	Oxidation	●	●	●	●	●

What happens if you ignore some of the basic rules of frying

When shallow frying use only a small quantity of fat or oil. This will help retain the food's flavour and is better for health reasons. Do not cover fried food, it will rapidly lose its crispness.

Butter, groundnut oil, dripping and lard have a very low smoke point and are therefore not suitable for deep frying. Use cottonseed oil, corn oil, soya bean, sunflower and safflower oils.

memo

- Wherever possible, reduce exposure of oil to oxygen. Keep deep fat fryers covered with a tight fitting lid when not in use. When filling or topping up, avoid pouring the oil from a great height. When filtering, reduce the free flow to a minimum. During slack periods reduce the temperature of the oil to about 93°C, and switch it off when you know it won't be used again.
- Consider the health and safety of your staff. Oil should be left to cool before draining. Fryers should never be overfilled, or overheated, or left unattended when in use. Keep a fire blanket and approved extinguisher close to the fryer. Make sure everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire.

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25 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

canned foods

Canned food is generally processed within a few hours of being picked. Sterilised and packed in a hermetically sealed container, the food will remain as fresh as the day it was canned. Some fruits and meat tend to change colour when in contact with tinplate, so the inside of the can is coated with a protective lacquer.

Discard cans which are blown, or have damaged seams.

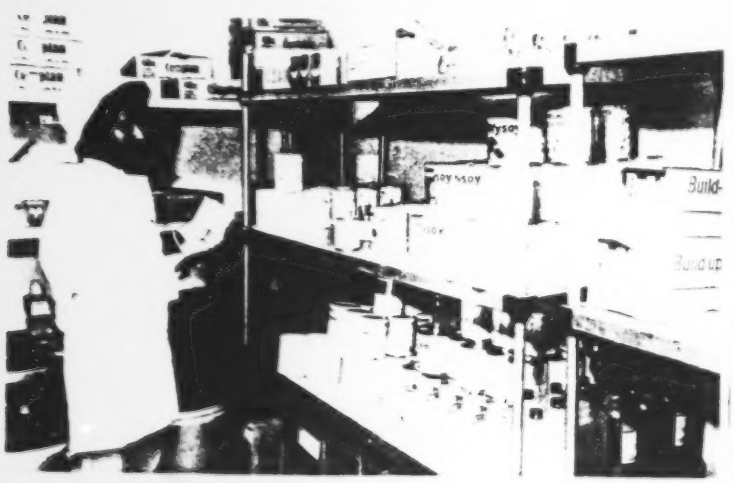
Once a can has been opened, any unused contents should be removed from the can and stored, covered, in a clean food container in the refrigerator.

ORDERING CANNED FOODS

- Ask for samples before choosing your supplier. Some large companies use a commercial laboratory to check samples against trade supplier's specifications.
- Trade specifications can be obtained from research stations such as at Chipping Campden or the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.
- Compare similar products from a range of suppliers.
- Weigh or count contents to check yield of solids and liquids.
- Ask for typical nutritional analysis especially if you are supplying customers with special needs, such as in hospitals, schools, or homes for elderly.
- Define product names, unit sizes and quantities in clear, unambiguous terms. Avoid short-cuts and abbreviations which may confuse your supplier.
- If practical, form a panel of typical customers to advise on product acceptability in terms of colour, flavour and texture.

Can sizes

Average content		
19 oz	540 g	A2
29 oz	820 g	A2½
35 oz	990 g	A3
46 oz	1300 g	A5
5 lb 8 oz – 6 lb	2½ kg	A6
6 lb 8 oz – 7 lb	3 kg	A10
28 oz	795 g	KC1
6 lb	2½ kg	KC3
10 lb	4½ kg	KC5



The word 'can' is a contraction of the word canister, from the Greek kanastron, a basket made of reeds used to carry food.

Although aluminium can be recycled, it is estimated that millions of pounds worth of cans are thrown away each year. It takes 95 per cent less energy to recycle used cans than to make aluminium from raw materials.

KNOW YOUR CANNED FOODS

Fruit is available in a light syrup or natural juice. Standard varieties include: solid pack, stewed or puréed apples, apricot halves or pulp, blackberries, blackcurrants, red or black cherries, fruit cocktail, fruit salad, gooseberries, whole or broken grapefruit segments, mandarin orange, orange segments, peach and pear halves or slices, pineapple crush, pieces or rings, red or golden whole or half plums, prunes, raspberries, solid pack rhubarb, strawberries, mixtures of various fruits and fruit pie fillings. More exotic varieties include figs, seedless grapes, lychees, mangoes and melon.

Vegetables. Standard varieties include beans in tomato sauce, beans in a low sugar sauce, beetroot diced and sliced, broad beans, butter beans, sliced or whole carrots, celery cuts or hearts, corn on the cob, sweetcorn niblets, cut or flageolet green beans, red kidney beans, mixed vegetables, button or sliced mushrooms, garden, marrowfat, mushy or processed peas, petit pois, new potatoes with or without skins, tomato puree, plum or chopped tomatoes. Exotic varieties include bamboo shoots, beansprouts, black-eyed beans, borlotti beans, cannellini beans, whole or puree chestnuts, chick peas, garnishing onions, pimentos, pinto beans, ratatouille, sauerkraut, spinach, vine leaves and white salad beans.

Meats such as: brisket of beef, corned beef, ham, parma ham, hot dogs, luncheon meat, meat balls, minced beef with onion and gravy, pork shoulder, steak and kidney, stewed steak, tongue, game, chicken and turkey.

Fish such as anchovies, cockles, escargots, herrings, lumpfish roe, mussels, pilchards, salmon, sardines, shrimps, tuna, lobster and crab.

Cakes, puddings, pasta and pasta toppings, creamed rice pudding.

Soups such as celery, chicken, minestrone, mulligatawny, mushroom, oxtail, scotch broth, tomato, vegetable. Also cock a leekie, royal game, beef consomme, clam chowder, crab bisque, vichyssoise, real and mock turtle.

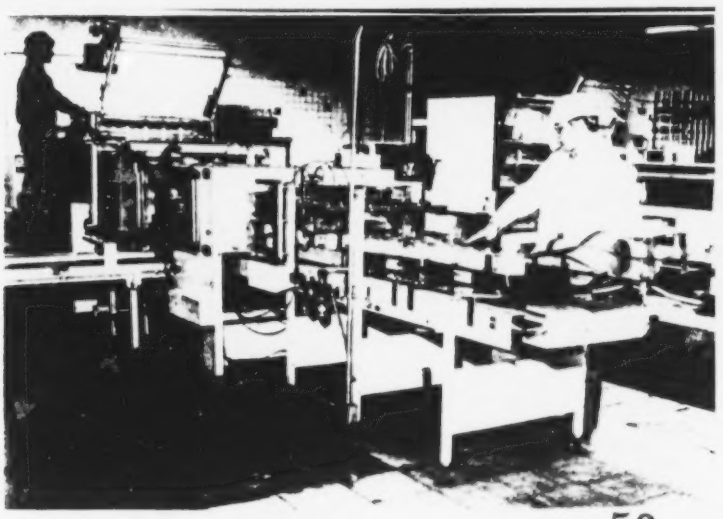
A short history of canning

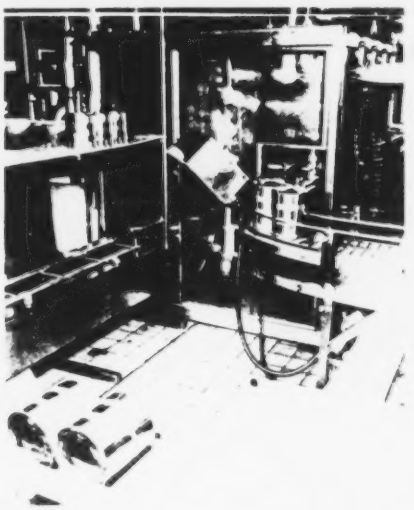
In 1809 a Frenchman, Nicholas Appert, published a report on the preservation of food, with details of his process for bottling and heating food. The following year, a Londoner, Peter Durand, patented a similar process, but making specific reference to 'tin or other pit metals to encase the food'. By 1812, Darkin, Hall and Gamble had set up 'an extensive food preservatory' in Bermondsey.

Sir Edward Parry's 1824 expedition to the Arctic carried canned meat. When stores abandoned by his ship, the 'Fury', were found some years later, a can of beef opened by scientists in 1835 was found to be well preserved.

The first canned foods reached the shops in Britain in 1830. They included tomatoes, peas and sardines, but were too expensive for the general public - a tin of soup cost the equivalent of 7½p, while the rent for a house was 12½p a week and it was another hundred years before canned foods were widely available at an affordable price.

In 1893, fruit canning was started in England. Extensive use was made of canned foods in the First World War. In 1927, Williamson's of Worcester installed a production line which in the first year produced 2 million cans.





26 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

chilled and frozen foods

Chilled and frozen foods can give versatility to a menu that would not otherwise be possible. They can also save on labour costs and reduce the level of expertise which is required.

Chilled foods come in many varieties, such as: sliced or whole cooked meats, ready-made fish, meat, pasta and vegetarian dishes, specialised entree dishes such as Duck à L'Orange or Pork Marsala and desserts which would be labour intensive for you to produce, such as meringue-based dishes.

Frozen foods are also available in a wide selection:

- Fish: all the normal species, as well as speciality dishes such as deep fry clams, king scallops, seafood cocktail, and swordfish, shark and tuna steaks.
- Meat: steaks, chops, pies and puddings, burgers and sausages, speciality items such as haggis, fast food burgers for griddling, microwave burgers, and steaks especially produced for sandwiches.
- Poultry: oven-ready, raw or cooked turkey, chicken, duckling and guinea fowl, with speciality items such as Tikka, Coronation, Kiev, Cordon Bleu and Mexican chilli chicken.
- Breakfast items such as smoked haddock, kippers, bacon grills, black pudding, hash browns, small whole or sliced mushrooms, petite pains, croissants, plain omelettes made with pasteurised eggs.
- Ready-made meals including multi-portion packs for hospitals, or large self-service restaurants, which include moussaka, cannelloni, lasagne, chilli con carne, goulash and casseroles. Speciality ranges presented in white stoneware dishes are particularly useful for pubs and restaurants.
- Vegetable dishes to suit vegetarian and healthy eating customers.
- Pie fillings and separate pastry lids.
- Microwave dishes, to be used in microwave oven of a specified kilowattage, include savoury and dessert items.
- Desserts include crêpes, pastries, mousse, fruits, ice creams and sorbets, gâteaux, cheesecakes, pies and flans, custards, creams and toppings.
- Potato products include chips, jacket potatoes, croquettes, roast, bubble and squeak, hash browns, mashed and pomme noisettes.

The Chinese built ice houses in 1100 BC.

Large scale freezing of meat began in 1880.

The American Clarence Birdseye built his first automatic quick-freezing machine in 1924.

J Lyons & Co has been accredited with introducing the first cook-chill system, in the 1950s.

Frozen vegetables are graded by the Campden specifications:

Premier is Campden A or better

Choice is Campden B or better

Standard is Campden C or D or better

All frozen meat and fish products are covered by the Meat Products and Spreadable Fish Products Regulations 1984 which specify the minimum content of meat, corned meat and added water content and labelling. This means 'burger', 'economy burger' and hamburgers, for example, must specify the meat content, and pastes and spreads must state the fish or meat contents.

PURCHASING GUIDELINES

Ensure your supplier:

- uses a clean and hygienic delivery vehicle which maintains the food at its correct temperature.
- is conversant with the Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990 and follows the Department of Health chilled and frozen food guidelines.
- produces portion sizes which are suitable for your type of trade.

- can deliver at the times and the frequency which will allow you to comply with the regulations for storage times.

Avoid too many deliveries of frozen foods as the temperature in your freezers will drop each time a new delivery is stored.

The minimum order quantities specified by suppliers means they can deliver cost-effectively over wide areas. If your ordering system takes account of usage, reflects such events as the weather and season of the year, the minimum order quantities should not present a problem.

Suppliers generally set a strict time limit to report damage or short deliveries, for return on the next delivery, for example, or the driver deals with the matter at the time of the delivery.

Caterers who use their microwaves on a continuous basis should be using an oven of not less than 1.5 kw power.

Handling and cooking (including microwave) instructions on the label are a useful guide to caterers. Follow them carefully.

Receiving and storage

- Check the packaging is intact. Check that the food is correctly labelled with the name of the company, description of the food, weight, product code, use-by date and ingredients list. The maximum shelf life of cooked chilled products should not exceed five days from the date of preparation.

- Check the temperature of food on delivery. Chilled food should be between 0°C and 5°C. The outer layer of quick frozen food should be below -12°C (-15°C from 1998).

Refrigerated storage temperature of between 0°C to 3°C must be maintained for chilled foods. Frozen food should be stored at -18°C or below. Ice cream should be stored in its own freezer at -20°C or below.

Chilled foods should be stored separately from normal refrigerated foods to avoid constant changes in temperature.

If stored in cold rooms, containers of chilled foods should be kept above floor level and away from the door to avoid temperature variations.

Refrigerated storage systems should allow for packs to be shelved or racked, with room for proper stock rotation.

Regularly check chilled food storage equipment using a thermometer or temperature probe. The instrument should be checked for accuracy every three months: dipped in boiling water, it should record 100°C; dipped in melting ice it should record 0°C.

When defrosting of the refrigerated storage is required, an increase of 2°C is permitted for a short period only.

If the temperature of any chilled foods exceeds 5°C but not 10°C between distribution and reheating, the food should be consumed as soon as possible and always within 12 hours of this temperature abuse. Any food not consumed within this time must be destroyed.

- If the temperature of any chilled foods exceeds 10°C during storage and before reheating, the food is unsuitable for use and must be destroyed.

The Department of Health *Chilled and Frozen: Guidelines on Cook-Chill and Cook-Freeze Catering Systems* (1989) contain basic rules for the storage and handling of such foods. They are available from HMSO, or via your local bookshop, quote ISBN 011 321161 9 when ordering.

The *Foodcraft* books in the HCTC/ Macmillan Education *Mastercraft* series contain detailed guidance on all aspects of cook chill and cook freeze foods.

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alcoholic beverages

BEERS AND LAGERS

Cask conditioned or traditional beers leave the brewery before they are ready for drinking. The final racking, venting, spiling and tapping of barrels is carried out by the purchaser on site. Skill is required to produce a reliable, good tasting beer or 'real ale'. Brewery conditioned beer comes ready to drink in bottles, cans, kegs or cellar tanks.

Bitter has a pronounced hop flavour. Lager is effervescent and light-bodied. Stout and Guinness are heavier, malt flavoured.

Low alcohol beers and lagers have an alcoholic content of between 1 and 9 per cent, depending on the brand. Non-alcoholic lagers have an alcoholic content as low as 0.05 per cent.

SPIRITS

Brandy is the distilled fermented juice of grapes; therefore, it is made in most wine growing countries. Cognac is brandy from the designated area of that name in France, and Armagnac is brandy from the Armagnac region of France.

Whiskey and whisky are made by distilling malted barley, unmalted barley, maize or rye. Only whisky made in Scotland can be spelt without the 'e'. Most Scotch whiskies are a blend of malt whisky and grain whisky matured for at least three years. The higher the quality, the greater the proportion of malt whisky. Good single malt whiskies are matured for at least 10 years. Irish whiskey is usually at least seven years old when sold. Most rye whiskey is made in the USA.

Gin is distilled from fermented grain, malted barley, maize or rye and does not have to be matured before drinking.

Rum is distilled from fermented molasses. White rum is light bodied and pale in colour, dark rum, also known as Jamaica rum, is full bodied.

Vodka is distilled from fermented rye, but other grains and even molasses is used. It is colourless and flavourless.

LIQUEURS

Liqueurs have a high alcohol content, 40 per cent or more. Said to aid digestion, they are served at the end of a meal; and, increasingly, to flavour and colour cocktails. The huge variety available includes:

- fruit- or citrus-based, such as cherry brandy, Grand Marnier, Cointreau
- herb-flavoured, such as Drambuie, Benedictine, Chartreuse, Galliano, Creme de Menthe and Vandermint
- bean and kernel-based, such as Creme de Cacao, Tia Maria
- others, such as Tiffin (from Darjeeling tea), Advocaat (with volks of eggs), and Bailey's Irish Cream and similar (with cream)

Cognac labels show the minimum length of time the brandy has matured in cask before bottling:

- Three star *** and VS, 3 years
- VO (very old) and VSOP (Very Special Old Pale), 8 years
- XO (Extra Old), a very long time, can be 30 years

Fruit spirits

Calvados — from France, made from cider, brown colour.

Framboise — made from raspberries, colourless.

Kirsch — made from cherries, colourless.

Mirabelle — made from small yellow plums, colourless.

Poire William — made from pears, colourless.

Slivovitz — from Hungary, Yugoslavia made from plums, colourless.

Other spirits

Angostura bitters — reddish brown, made from rum flavoured with spices.

Aquavit — colourless type of schnapps, flavoured with caraway seeds, from Scandinavia.

Campari (bitter) — red, flavoured with herbs and spices, from Italy.

Ouzo — colourless, but turns milky in water, flavoured with aniseed, from Greece.

Pernod and Ricard — yellow, turns milky in water or lemonade, flavoured with aniseed, from France.

Sake or Saki — colourless, strictly speaking a wine, made from rice, should be served hot, from Japan.

Schnapps — colourless, from grain or potatoes.

Tequila — colourless, made from the cactus plant, from Mexico.

WINES

Certain grapes make better wines than others. The grapes must contain enough sugar to reach a fairly high alcohol content of about 10 per cent, while being acid enough to prevent the growth of certain microbes, which will prevent it from fermenting.

Some of the best grapes and the wines they produce (in some cases blended with other grapes) are:

- black (purple) grapes: Pinot Noir, (red Burgundy and Champagne), Cabernet Sauvignon (red Bordeaux, also known as Claret), Gamay (red Beaujolais)

- white (green) grapes: Chardonnay (white Burgundy), Sauvignon Blanc (Sancerre and white Bordeaux), Riesling (Hocks and Mosels).

The vintage of a wine indicates the year in which the grapes were harvested. Non-vintage wine is a blend of wines from two or more years.

Sparkling wine is made when the carbon dioxide gas produced during a secondary fermentation is trapped in the wine, such as for Champagne.

De-alcoholised wine contains a very small amount of alcohol, between 0.05 and 0.5 per cent. Non-alcoholic wines contain rather more alcohol, between 0.5 and 4.5 per cent.

Most of the world's wine makers have to conform to strict regulations which determine how the quality of the wine is described on the label.

Wines at the lower end of the price range include those classified as Vin de table and Vin de pays (French), Tafelwein and Deutscher Tafelwein (German), Vino da tavola (Italian), Vino de mesa (Spanish), Vinho de mesa and Vinho de mesa regional (Portuguese).

Good quality wine in the medium and top price range include: Vin delimite de qualité superieure (VDQS) and Appellation d'origine contrôlée (AC or AOC) (French), Landwein, Qualitatswein bestimmter Anbaugebiete (QbA) and Qualitatswein mit Pradikat (QmP) (German), Vino tipico, Vino da tavola con indicazionne geografica, Denominazione di origini controllata (DOC), and Denominazione di origini controllata e garantita (DOCG) (Italian), Denominacion de origen (DO), Reserva and Gran reserva (Spanish), Vinho regional and Região demarcado (Portuguese).

FORTIFIED WINES

Sherry, is made exclusively in Spain. Any other sherry type wines must state the country of origin on the label in lettering of at least the same size as the word sherry.

Port is made in Portugal and can be anything from 4 to 40 years old before best for drinking.

Madeira, from the island of Madeira, varies from light and dry, to dark rich and sweet.

Marsala, made in Sicily, can be sweet or dry, and has good keeping qualities.

Muscat and muscatel are generally sweet and raisin-like, with a strong bouquet. One of the best known is Muscat-de-Beaumes-de-Venise from France.

Vermouths made from grapes grown on the foothills of the Alps, on both sides of the border between France and Italy, are flavoured with a number of herbs and spices.

Storing alcoholic beverages

- Cask conditioned beers need to stand for a time in a cool cellar for the fermentation process to be completed (between 24 and 72 hours), and for the sediment to settle. The casks should then be served within 3 or 4 days. So you need to carefully consider your sales pattern before deciding what quantities to order.

- All beers need proper temperature controls during storage. Beer served too warm will be 'wild' and foam excessively, too cold it will be flat. Stock rotation is also an essential part of good beer storage.

- Light changes the taste and smell of beer, this is why beer bottles are brown. Keep lights turned off when cellars and stores are not in use, and do not leave crates of bottled beer, or cases of lager in sunlight.

- Spirits and liqueurs should be stored upright, on open shelves.

- Store wines in a horizontal position to keep the corks moist, in contact with the wine. Wine should be kept in a dark, draught-free store, at a constant temperature of 11° to 13°C (52° to 56°F). Bottles with plastic tops can be stored upright.

- Store sherry upright on shelves, but fine old sherries should be kept horizontally in racks.

- Vintage port, which develops a crust in the bottle, should be stored in a horizontal position.

28 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

non alcoholic beverages

Offering customers a varied selection of non-alcoholic drinks will enhance your reputation and give good profit margins. For hotel guests a selection of drinks that includes decaffeinated tea and coffee, herb and fruit teas, cocoa, drinking chocolate, still or carbonated mineral waters shows a good attitude towards customer care. Vended drinks give a choice at any time of the day, or night, and in locations where no other form of service may be practical.

Many customers enjoy drinking lager with a little blackcurrant or lime cordial added. Squashes can be mixed with spirits for cocktails. Low calorie flavoured carbonated waters are popular, and mineral waters have become essential to the drinks trade. The addition of a suitable glass on the dining table encourages customers to order a mineral water as well as wine.

The Tea Council has excellent publicity material to help boost your afternoon tea sales: Sir John Lyon House, 5 High Timber Street, London EC4 3NJ, tel: 071-248 1024

The International Coffee Organisation will help you select your coffee and supplier: 22, Berners Street, London W1P 4DD, tel: 071-580 8591.

KNOW ...YOUR TEA

For black tea, the first two leaves and the bud are picked from the bush, allowed to wither and turn a copper colour. They are then put into dryers, where they become the familiar black leaves. Green tea is dried directly after picking. It has a mellow flavour and is not coloured green, but shades of grey to amber.

The Catering Tea Grading Scheme of the Tea Council sets out quality standards:

* One star Plain, a clean liquoring tea

** Two star Medium, a bright liquoring tea

*** Three star Quality, a bright tea, giving thickness, strength and quality.

India: *Assam* full-bodied with a rich malty flavour, *Darjeeling* very light and delicate with a muscat fragrance, *Nilgiri* light, bright and delicate.

Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) used in many blends; *Dimbula* golden coloured; *Nuwara Eliya* delicate, light and bright, excellent with lemon; *Uva* fine flavoured.

Africa: *Kenya* tea is full bodied and bright, a warm copper colour; *Tanzania* tea is bright, colourful and brisk.

Indonesia: light, fragrant, with a bright colour, mainly used for blending.

China: *Lapsang Souchong*, a smoky, tarry aroma and taste, excellent with lemon; *Keemun*, black tea, light, delicate, ideal with Chinese food; *Oolong* semi-green tea, light, very delicate, with the aroma and flavour of peaches and roses, serve without milk or sugar.

Herb teas provide an alternative to caffeine-rich drinks; and can support a fat reduced diet. Fruit-based teas need sugar or honey to bring out their flavours: peppermint, camomile, rosehip and limeflower are popular.

...YOUR COFFEE

How you purchase coffee will reflect the method, or methods used to make coffee in your establishment. Beans, ground as and when required, give the freshest taste.

- jug method:coarse-ground (on to which hot water is poured)
- plunger/pot, cafetiere and percolator: medium-ground
- vacuum or glass balloon (Cona): medium to fine-ground
- automatic filter, filter drip, Espresso, and Cappuccino: fine-ground
- Turkish, Greek or Arabic: very fine-ground.

Coffees have definite and distinctive characteristics. Among the so-called Arabica coffees are: Brazilian — thin, sweet, not too acid and a neutral flavour; Colombian — highly aromatic, full-bodied and good acidity; Kenya — aromatic, heavy-bodied, highly fruity and winey characteristics. Central American coffees range from the strongly aromatic, very sweet, medium-bodied and sharp in acidity to the less aromatic and sweet, thin and slightly bitter. Robusta coffees, mainly grown in Africa, are stronger in flavour than Arabica coffees, and very heavy in body. More exotic coffees include: Yemeni, Mocha, Java, Sumatra and Blue Mountain (Jamaica).

Storage of tea and coffee

Store on shelves in a cool dry place. Broken stock should be kept in airtight containers. Unopened tea and coffee can be stored for several months, but in the interest of quality and costs, purchases should allow for good stock rotation, plus a small emergency stock.

When they first appear on the tree, coffee berries are dark green. Gradually they change to yellow and after six to seven months, become deep red. Inside each berry are two seeds or beans, surrounded by a sweet pulp and covered with a thin, silver skin. For the wet cure method, the pulp is removed by machine, the berries soaked in water, dried in the sun and then placed in a huller to release the beans. For the dry method, berries are spread out on mats, left in the sun to dry, and hulled to remove the dried pulp and the silver skin at the same time.

Caffeine is extracted from unroasted coffee beans by one of three methods: hot water which washes away the caffeine; the application of carbon dioxide, under very high pressure; the use of organic solvents (by the time the beans have been roasted and dried the remaining solvent is virtually immeasurable).

Caffeine stimulates all body systems: nervous, cardiovascular and respiratory. A study in the USA of 800 people aged over 60, found that regular coffee drinkers were more sexually active! However large amounts can bring on nervous exhaustion, trembling and insomnia, and cause diarrhoea.

Instant coffee is greatly appreciated by many customers and gives caterers good profit margins. There are three main types of instant coffee: powder and granules made by the spray-dried technique, and freeze-dried granules (generally thought to give the best quality). Frozen or liquid coffee concentrates provide another option.

OTHER NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

Fruit juices have gained in popularity and a great variety is available. The choice of fresh, bottled, canned, dehydrated and frozen products includes soft fruits combined with apple, red and white grapes, many types of citrus and exotic fruits, and vegetable juices.

Carbonated waters such as soda water, tonic water, ginger beer, dry ginger, bitter lemon, lemonade, orangeade and cola flavours, are available in all quantities, bottled, canned or bulk to suit the demands of your trade.

Mineral waters are obtained from natural water springs and contain minerals found in the soil. They may be charged with carbonated gas during the bottling process, or may be 'still'.

Squashes are made from fruit juice with the addition of sugar, or artificial sweetener and preservatives so they keep well. Artificial flavours, such as emulsified essential oils or soluble essences, are also added. Squashes can be diluted with a choice of tap water, mineral water or soda water at a ratio of 1 to 3, or 1 to 4.

Cordials are the same as fruit squashes, but they are filtered to produce a clear liquid.

Fruit drinks are similar to squashes but contain shredded whole fruit, usually citrus, soaked in sugar syrup, which is called 'comminuted' material. Comminuted fruit drinks are also available as ready-to-drink carbonated varieties.

Barley drinks and waters contain cooked and sieved barley which has been incorporated into a diluted lemon and orange fruit base. Barley drinks contain comminuted fruit.

Syrups are similar to cordials, but in most syrups the flavour comes from the fruit base and artificial flavours are not added. The main use of syrups is as a base for cocktails, fruit cups or mixed with soda water as a long drink.

Tea growing in China dates back to pre-historic times. Growing was not started in India or Sri Lanka until 1865. Tea was brought to Europe by the Dutch in 1610 and to England in 1644.

According to one legend, coffee was discovered by a sheik living alone in the desert, who saved himself from starving by making soup from the berries of coffee plants. Another story tells of an Ethiopian goat keeper called Kaldi who found his goats behaved strangely after he fed them on the red berries of coffee trees. They would leap about as if dancing. Told about this, the abbot of a nearby monastery made a drink by pouring hot water on the beans. He and the monks drank this liquid every night, finding it helped them keep awake during prayers.

Soluble coffee was first sold in 1901 at the Panamerican World Fair. The new product and its process were developed by a Japanese, Dr Sartori Kato, who was granted a USA patent in 1903, when the commercialisation of soluble coffee began.

29 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

paper goods

In preparation areas

Any cellophane which comes into contact with food, must be labelled 'for food use', or a clear indication given of the particular use for which it is intended. Plastic film wrapping should not be allowed to come into contact with cheese, cooked meats and other products with a high fat content. Nor should such products be wrapped around food for microwaving.

Kitchen paper goods can be used for hygienic, cooking and presentation purposes. The range available includes:

- hand towels
- paper headwear for food handlers, cooks and chefs, available in various styles, including the white trilby which is popular with food service staff and managers. Headwear can be overprinted with your company name or logo
- sanitised, disposable wipes
- kitchen paper, for drying equipment, polishing cutlery, china and glass, drying fruit, vegetables and other foods which have been washed for hygiene reasons
- greaseproof for baking and wrapping food; waxed paper for piping chocolate and baking; plastic film wrapping for covering foods for storage; metal foil for wrapping food for cooking and storage
- plasticised cardboard food containers
- cake and pie frills and small cake paper cups
- cutlet frills for covering the ends of the bone, so adding to the eye appeal of dishes such as rack or crown of lamb.

In food and drink service

Disposable plates, containers, cutlery, cups and glasses are part of the basic equipment in many catering establishments.

Dish papers are used for serving dishes, or flats. Only the outer edge is decorated, with the centre plain so the food can be more easily removed. Doilies, in plain white, coloured, silver or gold, and in many designs, to decorate serving dishes, flats and plates.

Paper table napkins are obtainable in 1, 2, 3 ply and the heavier plasticised paper, with a wide range of colours, sizes and designs, including overprinting with your establishment's name, marketing advertisements, or logo. Disposable towels are available which can be heated for customers to use instead of a finger bowl.

Overcloths protect linen tablecloths, provide attractive designs and colour contrasts, and help develop themes.

Banqueting roll is available in all sizes, colours and designs, for boxing in side tables and buffet tables. The choice includes various thicknesses, extra durability, embossed designs, plasticised finish, and matching serviettes.

Drip mats for coffee or tea cups protect your customer from overflowing liquid. Beer and drink mats protect bar and lounge tables and can echo the theme of your business. Absorbent or plasticised varieties are available.

Other products include: drinking straws; paper packets of toothpicks; paper sunshades for cocktails.

In bedrooms

Guest rooms are given the professional touch by the provision of paper goods such as: stationery items, disposable bath mats (offering improved hygiene), toilet paper of good quality, colour and possibly perfumed, face tissue impregnated with make-up removal liquid, shoe cleaning cloths, laundry bags, tissues in coloured boxes or material containers to harmonise with the decor of the room.

British Rail passengers are served hot and cold drinks in EPS (Expanded polystyrene) cups, said to hold the temperature more effectively than paper cups, and cheaper than polythene lined paper cups.

Lids for vended drinks can be an important safety factor.

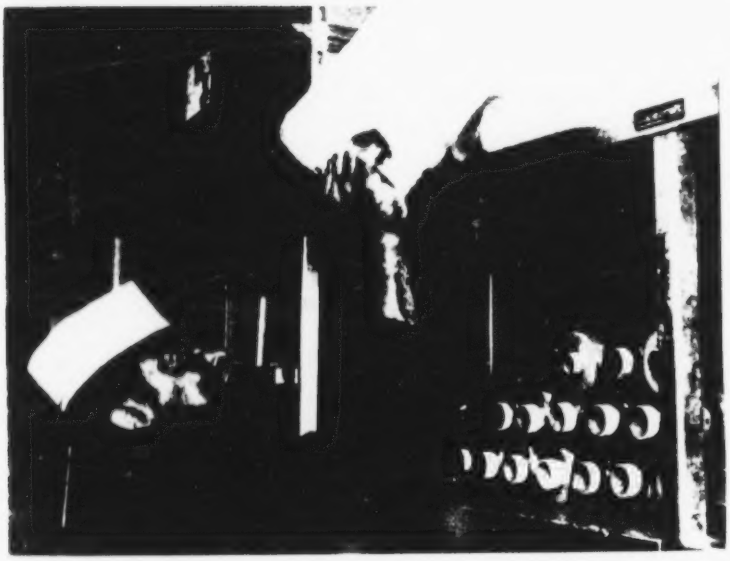
Disposable paper plates for vending food merchandisers, functions and outside catering need to be firm, and coated sufficiently to protect the customer. Coated and moulded paper plates offer good printability, but unless more expensive types are chosen, the rigidity and tensile strength is not as effective as moulded expanded polystyrene plates.

Special disposable catering trays, capable of withstanding temperatures between –40°C and + 200°C, can be used to cook, freeze and reheat foods. With a 'china like' appearance, they can be used as oven to tableware.

Paperboard containers suit food which needs quick microwave reheating. Their print finish is said to be sharper than expanded polystyrene.

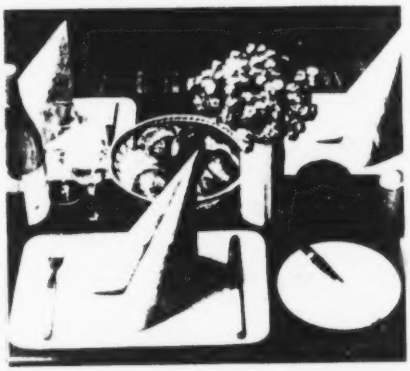
Transparent containers made of oriented polystyrene are resistant to scuffing, tearing, puncturing and do not 'fog' when used for lidded packs, such as takeaway salad boxes, which are subjected to temperature changes.

Laminated table coverings of regular ply tissue bonded to a polyethylene base provide a waterproof barrier designed to prevent staining of linen undercloths.



A Gallup Poll survey based on interviews with 1000 members of the public, revealed that 64 per cent would like to see more name badges worn by catering staff, 80 per cent thought that a name badge gave a business a more professional look and 75 per cent believed that they made it easier to praise or complain about service given.

For an attractive decoration for sponge cakes, lay a doily over the top of the cake, dust with icing sugar, then carefully remove the doily to leave an attractive design.



PURCHASE AND STORAGE OF DISPOSABLES

Disposables are costly: use maximum and minimum stock figures, plus a small emergency stock.

Shop around to find disposables which are suitable for your trade and will be a good marketing item. Avoid disposables which spoil the taste of food or drink, or are difficult to handle.

Disposables tend to gather static dust and pick up smells, so store in their sleeves and boxes, on shelves in an area away from chemicals and strong smelling substances.

In a recent cost-comparison by the British Warm Air Dryers Association and Electricity Council, warm-air dryers were found to cost substantially less per dry than paper towels. Against this must be considered the impact on the environment and hygiene issues. Both options have disadvantages: electricity requires fuel, trees have to be cut down to make paper. Both options have advantages over cloth towels in terms of hygiene: there is much less risk of bacteria spreading. So perhaps re-cycled paper towels offer the best, if more expensive option.

McDonald's and Wimpy are switching to less environmentally harmful disposables. In America, 20 McDonald's outlets and the oil company AMOCO are working on a scheme to recycle packaging as fuel pellets. Friends of the Earth have recently condemned the use of biodegradable plastics, in support of products which can be recycled. It costs Britain £720 million a year to dispose of rubbish, of which 70% is packaging.

Stricter controls on rubbish came into force in February 1991 under the Environmental Protection Act. Businesses can be fined up to £1000 for litter.

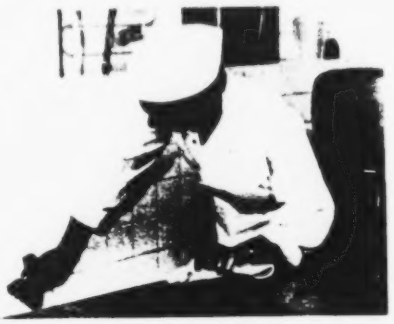
Paper goods can be a marketing tool, overprinted with the logo, name, address, telephone number and an advertising message for your business. When taken away they are often seen by many other people:

- boxes for confectionery, sewing kits, soap
- picnic boxes which a hotel might supply
- lunch boxes for business meetings, conferences and the secretary who hasn't time for lunch
- plasticised boxes for hot and greasy foods
- paper or cellophane packets holding serviettes, disposable cutlery and condiments
- paper bags to take the boxes away in, can be an extra advertising opportunity

30 MORE ABOUT PURCHASING

cleaning materials

A clean establishment gives customers confidence in the overall hygiene standards, in the kitchen and service areas. A recent survey by Expotel found that 92 per cent of guests rated cleanliness the top priority when choosing a hotel. In pubs and restaurants the state of the toilets will have an effect on the customer's overall impression.



Know your cleaning agents

Neutral general purpose detergents are made from strong alkalis and weak acids. They are generally safe for all purposes.

Alkali detergents, also known as hard surface liquid cleaners, are corrosive and can damage most surfaces including skin. Once cleaned, the surface should be well rinsed. Some alkali detergents contain abrasives, and these should never be used on surfaces that will scratch.

Acid detergents are used to remove strong lime deposits or other alkalis. Strong acids, such as hydrochloric acid, can harm hands; never mix them with other cleaning agents, as they can produce harmful chemicals and gases. Weak acids, such as those contained in lemon juice and vinegar, remove rust and persistent bath stains.

Abrasive cleaners consist mainly of finely ground minerals which rub away dirt. They are potentially the most harmful and damaging to surfaces.

Solvent based cleaners are a solution of liquid other than water, plus various additives which dissolve heavy grease and oil, which water cannot.

Many cleaning chemicals are colour coded to show their intended use. Ask your supplier for a chart to help you and your staff identify the different products easily.

memo

- When purchasing cleaning agents, pay special attention to the description: is it suitable and cost effective for your specific cleaning jobs? Consider the environment: use 'ozone-friendly' and non-aerosol products.
- Always follow instructions for use in handling, storing and disposing.
- Use colour-coded cloths and cleaning equipment to avoid the risk of spreading bacteria from one surface or piece of equipment to another. For example red cloths for toilet areas, green cloths for general purpose use, yellow cloths for surfaces in contact with food.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 (COSHH) require employers to carry out an assessment of hazardous substances used in their establishment. The assessment must cover:

- quantities and types of substances used and stored
- degree and length of exposure, and work areas affected
- existing control measures and their effectiveness
- monitoring of effects to health
- provisions for instructing, informing and training employees.

Employers are required to provide safe conditions — and to monitor these — for the use of hazardous substances including adequate ventilation, protective tools and clothing and where possible to:

- substitute with a substance that is not hazardous
- isolate the process involving hazardous substances.

Where necessary, employers must also introduce health surveillance measures.

PRODUCT CHECKLIST

Public areas and bedrooms

- Carpet shampoos: dry foam or wet process, hot water extraction or bonnet buffing.
- Furniture polishes: a silicone spray (sometimes anti-static), wax or a specialist polish for certain woods like teak, and leather soaps and polishes. Liquid furniture polish is used for sealed wood, wicker or cane. Do not use on waxed or French-polished surfaces because the silicone leaves a film. Cream polishes remove dirt and sticky spills, but do not produce a deep shine as they contain very little wax: use on polished wood, metal, glass and plastic.
- Floor polishes: solvent or water based, for buffing or sealing.
- Alkali detergent for cleaning paintwork and walls. Fabric wallcoverings may need a stain remover, and leather or wood a suitable cream or polish.
- Alkali detergent, cream or liquid, with no abrasives for painted doors and door kickplates and bumpers. Wood doors may require a little wax, teak may need oiling.
- Neutral detergent for glass surfaces; greasy surfaces need an alkali solution and mirrors may need a special cleaner.

Bathrooms and toilets

- Baths, wash hand basins and shower units: neutral detergent; alkali detergent for stubborn stains.
- Toilets: neutral detergent for general cleaning; alkali detergent for daily use; acid cleaner once weekly.

Bars

- Glass washing machines: liquid detergent and rinse aid.
- Bar tops: neutral detergent.
- Beer lines: detergent.

Kitchens

- Dish washers: liquid, powder or solid detergent and rinse aid (see box).
- Pot wash: detergent and degreasant.
- Ovens: specialist oven cleaner. Generally these products are highly toxic and corrosive: the person carrying out the task must wear protective goggles, mask over the mouth and nose, and heavy duty gloves.
- Hard surface cleaners and heavy duty degreasant as required.
- Carbon deposits on griddles and ovens: carbon remover.
- Equipment with limescale deposits: descaling agent.
- Wash hand basins: bactericidal soap.

Sanitisers

Liquid or soluble powder sanitisers, are available for cleaning work surfaces, walls, floors, equipment and utensils.

- Correctly used sanitisers can contribute to, but not replace, good working hygiene standards. Wiping down a chopping board with a sanitiser will be useless if unhygienic work methods are subsequently used.
- Manufacturers' instructions on usage, storage and possible toxicity or effects on skin must be made clear to all users.
- Powder sanitisers, dissolved in hot water, will require a final rinse and are not suitable for use on certain metals.
- Liquid sanitisers are diluted before use, must be left to dry and not rinsed off.

Purchasing dish-washer chemicals

- consider type of articles which will be washed
- take into account age of machine, whether it is conventional or low temperature type, single or multi-tank
- check back-up service offered by makers
- never pick a product solely on the basis of the lowest price, you may have to use more of the cheaper product
- consider if the product is being used in a hard or soft water area
- avoid uninhibited (unrestrained), or poorly inhibited caustic-based detergents, which can eat away the machine, causing major maintenance costs
- combine with appropriate rinse aid (Rinse aids prevent the formation of water droplets, which slow down the drying rate and increase the need for using unhygienic drying cloths.)

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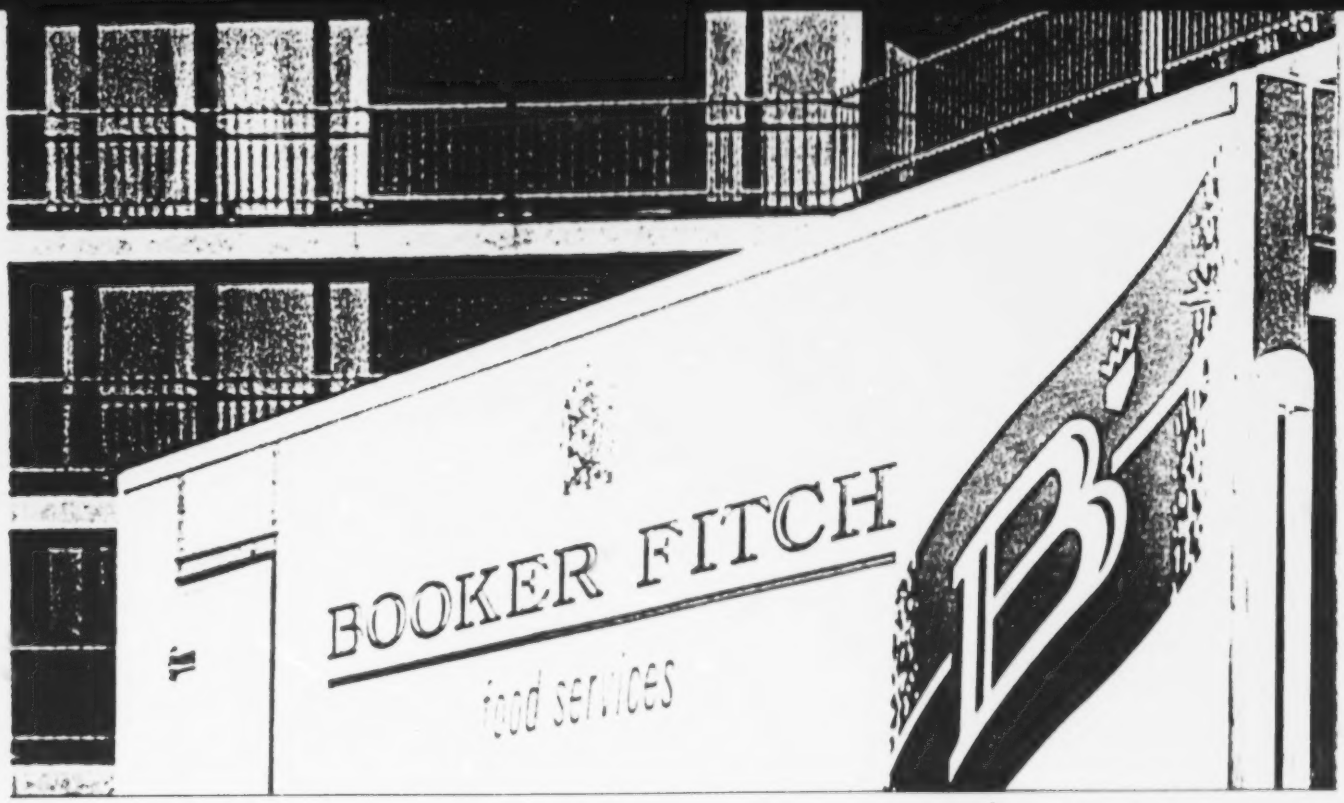


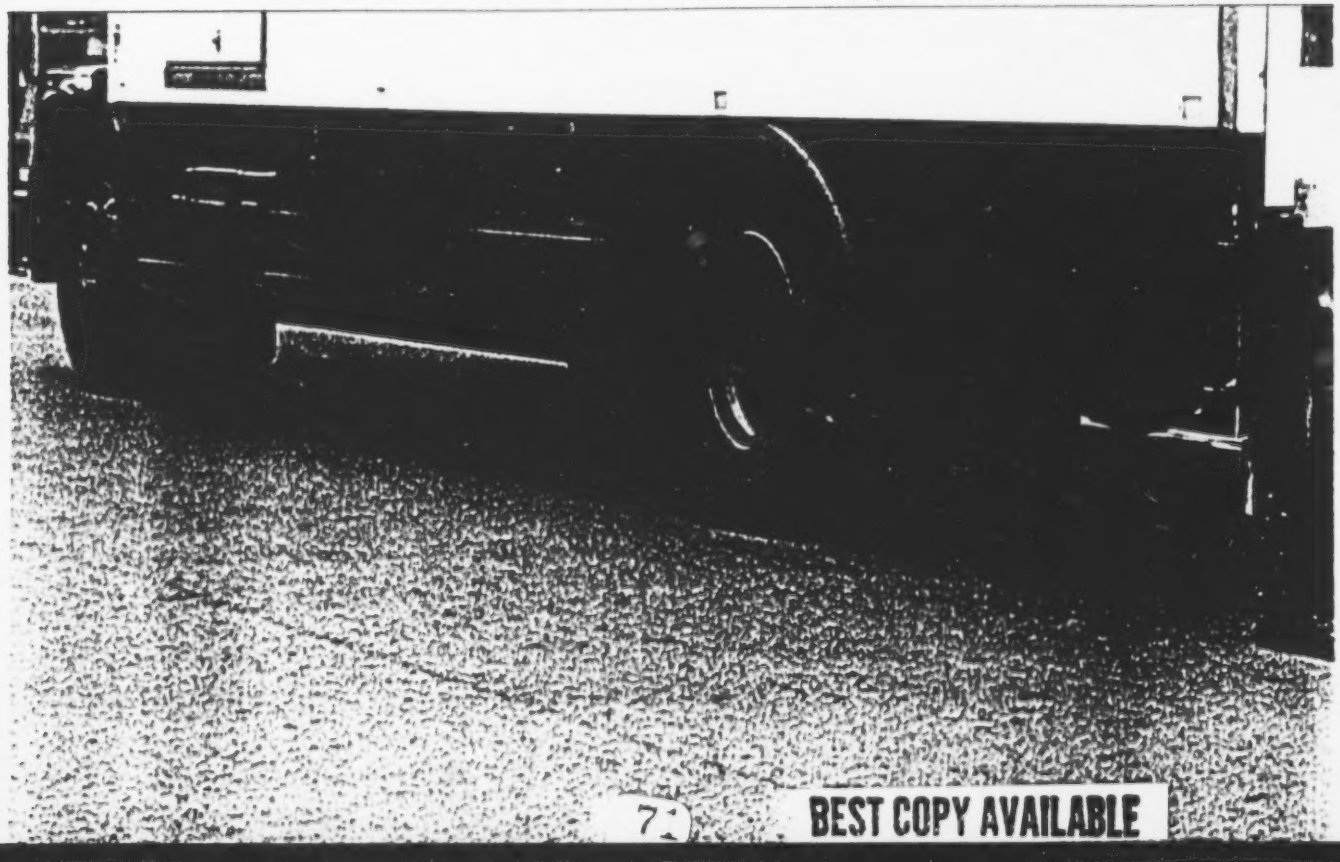
HOTEL & CATERING TRAINING COMPANY

Training for Business Success

BOOKER FITCH

food services

taking Care ... seriously



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